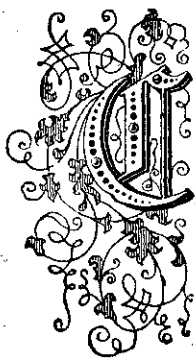


Oct 27 1901

MISS ANNIE COLESON'S

Own Narrative of her



APTIVITY AMONG THE SIOUX INDIANS.

AN INTERESTING AND REMARKABLE ACCOUNT

OF THE

TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS

AND

PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE

OF THIS

Beautiful Young Lady.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

Ann Coleson

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CAPTIVITY
AMONG
THE SIOUX INDIANS
OF
Miss Annie Coleson.

ON the night of the 12th of January, the dwelling of Mrs. A. Coleson, near New Ulm, in Minnesota, was attacked by a straggling party of Sioux Indians, under their Chief, White Eagle, a warrior of some renown. This dwelling was built in primitive style, of logs, in the form of a double cabin, of which one room was tenanted by Mrs. Coleson and her family of four persons, two sons and two daughters, all grown to maturity; while the other was occupied by a hunter named Marts, his wife and three children.

The hour was twelve o'clock at night. One of the daughters was still busily engaged at the loom, and the other was spinning flax. Both young men had retired to rest, so had the children of Mrs. Marts, though that lady and Mrs. Coleson were sitting up waiting the return of Marts, and wondering why he did not come.

In these new settlements, it is not unusual for families, to be supplied with food for months from the forest and the river. Thus the skill of the husband and father is brought into daily requisition. His return at nightfall laden with the spoils of the chase, is anticipated with the fondest anxiety by the wife and her little ones. Should he be unavoidably detained by accidents, wandering out of the way, or other misfortunes, she experiences all the tortures of apprehension and suspense; goes to the door and looks out, listening every few minutes, neither can she banish the thought that something dreadful has happened, until re-assured by his well known step and welcome voice.

On the evening in question, the darkness of the night, the lateness of the hour, the unusual absence of Marts, and perhaps a sense of im-

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pending danger, all conspired to give earnestness and tone to the conversation of the two elderly women as they sat cowering over the fire, whose light and warmth irradiated the entire apartment.

"There's something going to happen, I know very well," said Mrs. Coleson, her voice falling to a mysterious whisper, "and if it is not death, never you believe me again; John says it is nothing, but I am older than John."

"You speak of the dog," said Mrs. Marts.

"Yes, the dog (you heard him as well as myself, sighing and moaning like a human creature in pain, and all night long, too—not a regular howl, but a cry of agony—I couldn't sleep for it, you couldn't sleep for it, Ann and Sally couldn't sleep for it."

"Hark! what's that?" interrupted Mrs. Marts.

Both women listened.

"Owls," said Mrs. Coleson.

"That isn't their usual manner of hooting, is it?" inquired Mrs. Marts, "I will go to the door and listen, maybe I'll hear something of Marts."

"Don't you open the door!" exclaimed Mrs. Coleson. "You don't know who or what you may be letting in."

"Why, what do you mean?" said Mrs. Marts, eyeing her companion with a sort of amazed curiosity.

"Just what I say, don't you open that door!"

"There's somebody," and Mrs. Marts held up her finger in a listening attitude.

"The horses, I guess," answered Mrs. Coleson.

These animals were enclosed as usual in a pond near the house, and by repeated snorting and galloping announced the presence of some object of terror.

"You had better call John," said Mrs. Marts.

"I will," and Mrs. Coleson ascended to the loft, where her sons slept.

John the elder was wide awake and had been for some time. He had often been upon the point of calling his brother Thomas, but had been as often restrained by the fear of incurring ridicule, and the reproach of timidity, in that neighborhood, an unpardonable blemish on the character of a man. From the commencement of the alarming symptoms, he had felt convinced that mischief was brewing. Rising at once, when his mother appeared, the movement awakened Thomas, who demanded "What was the matter?" Before either had time to reply, hasty steps were heard in the yard, and quickly afterwards several raps at the door accompanied by a demand for admittance in a voice evidently intended to simulate that of Marts.

By this time both Mrs. Coleson and her sons had reached the basement, while Mrs. Marts, thinking only of her husband, hastily arose

and advanced to withdraw the bar, which secured the door, when Mrs. Coleson, who had lived long upon the frontier and probably had detected the Indian tone in the words just uttered, sprang forward and ordered Mrs. Marts not to admit them, declaring that they were Indians.

"Boys, to your guns" she cried, with the look and manner of a heroine.

The young men immediately sprung to their arms, which were always charged, prepared to repel an enemy.

The Indians finding that their true character had been discovered, began to thunder at the door with great violence, but a single shot from a loop-hole compelled them to shift the attack to some less exposed point and unfortunately they discovered the back door of the cabin, which was much less securely guarded and which communicated with the apartment where the girls were at work. The rifles of the brothers could not be brought to bear upon all points at once. By means of rails taken from the yard fence, the door was broken open, and the two girls were at the mercy of the savages. Ann was immediately secured, stripped entirely naked, and subjected to the most horrible of personal outrages; but Sally, seeing the fate of her sister, determined to die rather than surrender. Seizing a large carving knife she had been using in the loom, she defended herself desperately, and stabbed one of the Indians to the heart, before she was tomahawked.

Presently the crackling of flames was heard, accompanied by a triumphant yell from the Indians, announcing that they had set fire to that division of the house which had been occupied by the daughters, and of which they held undisputed possession.

The fire was quickly communicated to the rest of the building, and it became necessary either to abandon it or perish in the flames. In the one case there was a bare possibility that some might escape; in the other, death would be inevitable. The rapid approach of the fire allowed but little time for consideration. Even then the flames had made a breach, and some of the Indians were preparing to enter. The door was thrown open, and all rushed out; Mrs. Coleson, guarded by her eldest son, attempted to cross the fence at one place, while the other son, carrying the two eldest children, hurried off in another direction, leaving Mrs. Marts with her infant, to follow as she best could.

In their eagerness to secure the provisions and valuables belonging to the house, the Indians at first paid little attention to their escape, and Mrs. Coleson had reached the stile and was crossing over, when she was severely wounded in several places by rifle balls, she fell shrieking in agony; her son, paralysed by grief and horror, stooped over to assist her, when he was instantly seized upon from behind, and made a

22 MRS. MARTS AND HER CHILD SCALPED AND THROWN IN THE FLAMES.

prisoner. The other young man succeeded in reaching the fence unhurt, but in the act of passing was vigorously assailed by several Indians, who, throwing down their guns rushed upon him with their tomahawks. He made a gallant defence, firing upon the enemy as they approached, and then wielding the butt of his rifle with a fury, that drew their whole attention upon himself, he gave Mrs. Marts and her children an opportunity of effecting their escape. However, he was soon overpowered by numbers, wounded both in the head and breast, and taken prisoner.

Mrs. Marts might have escaped to a place of safety with her children, had she taken advantage of the darkness and pre-occupation of the enemy and fled, but instead of that the terrified woman ran around the house wringing her hands, and shrieking in frantic despair. This was followed by a faint moan. One of the savages had sunk his tomahawk in her brain. She was then scalped, her body mutilated in a shocking manner, and then thrown warm and bleeding into the flames.

The infant as it fell from her arms, was seized by a huge wolf dog, and actually devoured alive. One of the other children, a boy about three years old, screamed and wept at the dreadful fate of the baby. This irritated the savages. One of them took him by the heels, dashed him against a tree, stabbed and scalped him, then threw him also into the fire. The other child, a girl, was too frightened even to weep, hence she was suffered to live.

Thus of two happy families of five persons each, only four individuals escaped the slaughter, and these were exposed to all the horrors and sufferings of captivity in mid-winter.

The cold was intense, the snow two feet upon a level; the prisoners thinly clad. The young men in the hurry of the moment, when first attacked, had forgotten to put on their coats and since then they had not had the opportunity; now with no protection but their shirts and trowsers, the cutting north wind seemed to pierce their very bones, still, as it congealed the blood around their wounds, and thus prevented the bleeding, it proved a real advantage to them. Their own sufferings were forgotten in witnessing the dreadful condition of their sister, and being denied the privilege of assisting her. The Chief, White Eagle, in an unusual fit of amiability allowed her the use of some old garments, which were only serviceable as being better than none.

The captives were hurried off in a northerly direction and soon reached a dense forest of pines, where the Indians halted to arrange and tie up their plunder. While they were busy about this John Coleson counted them, and the whole number amounted to forty eight, including two white men, who were with them painted and plumed as they were; several of the Indians could speak English, and the



"Her child, an infant a few months old, she managed to conceal in her clothing, but, on arriving at the place where the women were, it was discovered."—See Page 54.

brothers knew some of them very well; having often seen them going up and down the rivers. The greater number were Sioux, though there were individuals belonging to other tribes.

After stopping, perhaps fifteen minutes, they resumed their journey, and were soon joined by other parties of Indians, some on foot, others on horseback, but all loaded with plunder and accompanied by prisoners of all ages and conditions. The savages wore snow-shoes, and travelled rapidly, driving their captives before them like so many cattle. When one began to lag behind the others, they whipped and scourged the naked flesh of the sufferer to hasten his or her speed. When one gave out entirely, and blows were powerless to make him or her go farther, they would sear the tenderest parts of the victim's body with lighted pine torches, tear out the entrails and pluck off the scalp. In some instances they cut out the breasts of women, roasted the flesh and compelled the survivors to partake of it. Thus, the number of captives gradually diminished, and before morning all the more delicate women and many of the children had perished.

An hour before sunrise they halted for breakfast, and kindled a fire. The captives wanted to approach in order to warm their stiffened limbs; this the Indians, in mere wantonness of cruelty, forbade—hence the poor tired creatures were obliged to keep in constant motion to prevent their being frozen. Some of the captives got a morsel or two to eat, but by far the greater number received nothing, though suffering the keenest pangs of hunger. Here the Indians appeared to hold a council, and after it closed, they broke up into parties of two or three, and went off in different directions, each one appropriating to himself such captives as he claimed. This arrangement was a great grievance to the unhappy prisoners, as the dearest friends, who might have found some consolation in sharing each other's sorrows and knowing each other's fate, were thus separated, perhaps forever. Ann Coleson parted from her brothers with many tears. They, with their captors, went off towards the Great Missouri, while hers took the direction of the Northern Lakes. She, and a little girl, named Mary Ellis, whose parents had both been slain, were accompanied by two Indians and a Canadian half-breed, who led them to a place in the woods where three horses were picketed; each of the Indians mounted and took a prisoner behind him—the Canadian mounted the third horse, and started in the lead. They soon came to a river, which was frozen over, and they crossed on the ice; the little girl soon began to cry with hunger and excessive cold, when the Indian she rode with tomahawked and scalped her, leaving the body in the path to be devoured by the wolves.

Ann Coleson was thus left alone with her tormentors, but though suffering excessively, she feared to make any complaint. At length her

Indian master gave her a pair of leggins, lined with fur, and moccasins for the protection of her feet; she also received a small portion of dried deer's flesh, and a spoonful of whisky, which in her exhausted condition was exceedingly palatable and nourishing.

They travelled all day very hard, and that night arrived at a large camp, covered with bark, which by appearance might hold one hundred men; they took her, however, about three hundred yards from the camp, into a large, dark cave—bound her arms, spread a bed of buffalo and wolf skins, and laid down, one on each side of her.

The next morning they were joined by numbers of their former party, who had only separated from them and gone off in another direction in order to mislead and baffle pursuit, should one be instituted. They had many prisoners with them, some of whom it seemed had been condemned to the fiery torture, and painted black; others were manacled hand and foot, and all bore the marks of extreme hard usage. Ann Coleson looked in vain for her brothers, but though she recognized the Indians by whom they were captured, she saw nothing of them. Had they been exchanged for others? Or had they given out and been left on the road? This seemed most probable, and deeply as she felt their loss, her sorrow was modified by a feeling of satisfaction that they were beyond the reach of farther trouble.

This day they proceeded amid dreadful storms of snow and occasional torrents of rain, which drenched them to the skin, through a barren and desolate country, where it was impossible, with the wet moss and green brushwood, to kindle a fire. The Indians marched on with stoical indifference, mindless alike of wind or weather. Sometime through the day they killed a deer, which was cut up and eaten raw; the heart, warm and bleeding, was given to Ann—hunger is not fastidious, she devoured a small portion, and concealed the rest about her person till some future time.

She soon discovered that the savages were making preparations for another plundering expedition. Spies were sent out to discover whether any white men were in the neighborhood. After a short absence they returned with intelligence that they had seen six log houses, about twelve miles distant, on the east side of the river that communicates with Rainy Lake. All was now warlike preparation; the guns, knives and spears were carefully examined, and as they learned that the nature of the ground would render it easy to advance unperceived, it was determined to steal upon their victims in this manner. This plan was executed with the nicest exactness, and nothing could present a more dreadful view of human nature in its unenlightened state, than the perfect unanimity of purpose which pervaded the whole body of Indians on this horrid occasion, although at other times they were greatly at variance. Each man first

painted his target, some with a representation of the sun, others of the moon, and several with the pictures of birds and beasts of prey, or of imaginary beings, which they affirmed to be the inhabitants of the elements, upon whose assistance they relied for success in their enterprise. They then moved with the utmost stealth in the direction of the houses, taking care not to cross any of the hills which concealed their approach. It was a most favorable circumstance that the poor settlers had taken up their abode in such ground, that their enemies, without being observed, formed an ambuscade not two hundred yards distant, and lay for some time watching and marking their victims. Here they left their prisoners, all bound to trees, with gags in their mouths to prevent their making any noise or giving the alarm, and here they made their last preparations for the attack. The Indians tied up their hair in a knot, behind, lest it should be blown in their eyes; painted their faces black and red, which gave them a most hideous aspect; deliberately tucked up the sleeves of their jackets close under the armpits, and pulled off their moccasins; while some, still more eager to render themselves light for running, threw off their jackets, and stood with their weapons ready in their hands, quite naked, except their breech clothes.

It was near one o'clock in the morning when all their arrangements were completed. The settlers were all quietly sleeping, unconscious that danger was so near, when the Indians uttered a tremendous whoop and simultaneously rushed from their concealment. In an instant the unfortunate wretches, men women and children, were aroused. The men sprang for their fire arms, the women to barricade the doors, while others ran out and attempted to escape. The Indians however, had completely surrounded them; many were murdered in cold blood, and all the dwellings were set on fire.

These people were all Germans, against whom the savages had conceived a particular spite. One girl, about sixteen years of age, ran from the burning house of her parents, and came directly to the tree where Ann Coleson was bound; she was pursued by two Indians, one of whom stuck a spear in her side; she fell at Ann's feet, and clasped her ankles so tightly, that it was with difficulty she could extricate herself from the dying sufferers grasp. Notwithstanding the danger to herself, Ann solicited very hard for her life, but the murderers made no reply until they had both stuck their spears through her body, and transfixed her to the ground; they then looked Ann sternly in the face, and commanded her to be silent under the penalty of being treated in the same manner, while they laughed at and jeered the poor wretch, who was shrieking in agony and moving and twisting about their spears like a tortured worm.

Shocked and grieved beyond measure, Ann implored her master, who

now came up, to dispatch the poor victim and end her misery, since she was so severely wounded that recovery would be impossible.

The wretched creature seemed to understand the purport of her words; she raised her eyes, and said something in German. Even in this most miserable state, the love of life was predominant; for though this might justly be called the most merciful act that could be done for the poor creature, it seemed to be unwelcome. Exhausted as she was by pain and loss of blood, she made several efforts to ward off the friendly blow; at last an Indian, with his spear pierced her through the heart, and she expired.

After this inhuman butchery, the Indians again separated, different parties going off in different directions; some professedly to hunt, the others to plunder and devastate the outside settlements. They evidently feared to come in contact with the United States troops—their chief aim and great delight being to surprise and butcher some frontier family, pick off some careless hunter, or kidnap women and children. They seemed also excessively afraid of the escape or recovery of their prisoners, and hence hurried them away by long and painful marches to their remotest towns.

Of the incidents connected with this long and wearisome journey, Ann Coleson gives a graphic and interesting description. Their party consisted of five persons, three Indians, herself and a captive boy. The want of forage, probably, or perhaps some other reason, had caused them to leave all the horses behind.

"They put us in harness," says Miss Coleson, in her Journal, meaning herself and the boy, whose name was Frank Scott.

"They put us in harness, with a broad leather strap passing over the breast and shoulders, to which a strong rope was attached, and thus we could drag a load, while our arms were at liberty. Among all the Indian tribes the females are expected to perform the drudgery, hence they had no mercy upon me, and not being accustomed to such work or such traveling, the sledge I was compelled to draw with the weight of plunder upon it, caused me to suffer intolerable fatigue. They gave me a pair of snow shoes, but not being accustomed to their use, which can only be acquired by a severe apprenticeship, they proved an encumbrance rather than otherwise.

"The Indians selected for their route the frozen surface of a river, the name of which I never learned. The snow shoes were heavy, and soon became thickly clogged with ice, there being much water between the surface of the river and the snow, which froze immediately; it was necessary to be provided with short sticks for beating this off. Before us was one uniform white expanse of snow, on each side a thick impenetrable forest. With our utmost exertions we could only proceed

at the rate of two miles in an hour and a half; the Indians grumbled at this, and threatened all manner of terrible things, but upon finding that I really did my best, and could not possibly travel with greater speed, they considerably lightened my load, by removing several articles, which they buried in the snow.

"I shall never forget the sense of relief which came over me, when a halt for the night was ordered; such utter, utter weariness I had never before experienced. The poor boy, my fellow captive, was no better off; he was an invalid, suffering from disease of the heart, and altogether unable to endure such wearying toil. I wished to sympathize and converse with him, but the Indians forbade it; we were watched and guarded with the utmost jealousy—each look or word they interpreted to be significant of some plan to escape.

"Our resting place for the night was a small log hut, which stood on the river bank, and had probably at some past period been occupied by a party of hunters. The Indians had become much kinder in their manner towards us, not only allowing us a tolerable meal of roasted meat, but suffering us to sit by the fire, which was the greatest of all comforts. The fire-place ran along the entire end of the building, and was filled with enormous logs, the one at the back of the hearth being so heavy as to require the strength of two or three men, with the aid of levers, to bring it in; over this fire the moccasins and leggins of the whole party were hung to dry. To beds, and all other comforts except what fire could bestow, we had bidden adieu—but a pile of skins lay in one corner, and wrapped in one of these I slept soundly on the floor.

"The next day was a journey of twelve miles; snow had fallen in the night, and as it still lay soft, our progress was even made more difficult than before, if that were possible. At every step my feet felt as if chained to the ground, by ice and clotted snow, and as the shores of the river widened the feeling of disappointment was added to our other troubles: the point on which our eyes were wistfully fixed, appeared, after an hour's hard toiling, scarce nearer than before. Headland seemed separated from headland by interminable space, and we looked, oh, how long and vainly for the end.

"The boy, Frank, fell into an air-hole, up to his middle, where he hung, supporting himself by the arms, until he could be pulled out.—Unfortunately, against this danger no precaution could be of any avail, and we were obliged to take our chance for a ducking or a drowning; the Indians ungenerously compelled us to go first, and in this they were probably influenced quite as much by the love of ease as a sense of danger; for as the first one had to make the way upon the untrodden snow, and upon the large track of his or her snow-shoes those who followed found comparatively firm footing.

"The Indians prescribed our course according to their notions of the safety of the ice, which being founded on their recollected knowledge of the river, was but poor guidance—while many and circuitous was the paths we had to make in consequence. During the afternoon a snow storm came on, beating directly in our faces; it blew a hurricane; we were unable to see each other at a greater distance than ten yards, and the drift made the surface of the snow through which we were toiling, appear like an agitated sea. Wheeled round every now and then by the wind, the cloud which enveloped us was so strong that it produced a sense of suffocation. Even the Indians admitted that it was impossible to proceed; the forest was near, and there we took refuge, turning our shoulders to the blast, and preparing to bivouac for the night.

"For a wonder, the Indians went to work themselves; with their hatchets, they soon felled a good sized maple tree, while Frank and myself, with large pieces of bark ripped from the fallen tree, cleared of snow a square spot of ground. All savage nations possess, in the greatest perfection, the art of kindling or rather of making fire. The Indians carried with them for this purpose, the fibrous bark of the white cedar, previously rubbed to a powder between the hands, which being ignited in some mysterious manner, and blowed upon, a flame was produced. This they fed, first by the silky peelings of the birch bark and then by the bark itself, when the oily and bituminous matter burst forth into full action, and a splendid fire raised its flames and smoke amidst a huge pile of logs, to which each one contributed a share.

"The next thing was to rear some kind of a shelter; as we had neither wigwam or tent poles, we were obliged to find a substitute in the spruce boughs, which grew around in the greatest plenty; having erected these as a partial defence against the snow, which was still falling, we sat down determined to make the most of what was, under the circumstances, a source of real consolation—we enjoyed absolute rest—the snow scarcely touched our square, one side of which was bounded by a large tree, which lay stretched across it; against this our fire burned briskly—while on the opposite side, towards which I had turned my back, another very large tree was standing, and into the side of this latter, which was decayed and hollow, I had by degrees worked my way, and it formed an admirable shelter.

"And there we sat, listening to the crashes of the falling trees, and the cracking of their vast limbs, as they writhed and rocked in the tempest, creating the most awful and impressive sounds, while the snow banked up all around us like a white wall, resolutely maintained its position, not an atom yielding to the fierce crackling fire which blazed and sparkled so near it.

"After supper the Indians relapsed into their usual taciturnity,—one



"This was followed by a faint moan; one of the savages had sunk his tomahawk in her brain. She was then scalped, her body mutilated in a shocking manner, and thrown warm and bleeding into the flames."—See Page 23.

by one they lighted their tobacco pipes and continued smoking till a late hour, when dropping off by degrees, the whole party at last lay stretched out and snoring.

"This night, for the first time, they had neglected to bind us—perhaps they thought we would know better than to attempt an escape through the snow, so far from human habitations, where death from hunger and cold would be inevitable—and they judged rightly; our enormous fire had the effect of making me so comfortable, that only something of the most extraordinary nature, could have induced me to leave it. The scene was alike remarkable for its novelty and its dreariness; the volumes of smoke puffed and curled around me; the fire sparkled and snapped and threw out cinders, which burned holes in my clothes wherever they touched; large flakes of snow continued to fall, and heavy clots dropped occasionally upon the ground, and covered the sleeping figures of the men; the wind howled like an angry demon through the trees, whose majestic forms overshadowed us on every side, while the fire which rose so brilliantly and shed the light of day on the immediate surrounding objects, diffused a deeper gloom over the farther recesses of the forest. I had not the least inclination to sleep until near midnight. A solemn impression, tinged with melancholy, weighed heavily upon me; I thought of the fatigue I had undergone, and shuddered at the foreboding of what was to come. Distant scenes were brought to my recollection; my mother, dead and cold; my brothers, gone I knew not whither; myself a prisoner, a slave, condemned to a routine of ceaseless drudgery—then my eyes were lifted involuntarily towards heaven, and were finally attracted by the filmy wandering leaves of fire that ascended lightly over the tree tops, for a moment rivaling the stars in brightness, and then vanishing forever. 'Was ever a woman so singularly situated before?' I asked myself over and over again, as wrapping my buffalo skin around me, I sank down to enjoy for several hours, a refreshing and uninterrupted sleep.

"My master wakened me at daylight—I arose, feeling excessively cold, and found the whole party stirring. The Indians were preparing breakfast, over a bed of living coals; the snow had ceased falling, the sky was clear, but the cold seemed more piercing and intense, if possible. My limbs were stiff and numb, while a soreness and aching in my ankles made me apprehend an attack of inflammation and swelling in the instep, which is often the painful consequence of wearing snow shoes, to those unaccustomed to their use. The morning, however, was bright and clear; the Indians anxious to proceed—we shared their breakfast with them, and such was the exhilarating effect of the keen, sharp air, that new strength and elasticity seemed diffused through all my frame.

"We had travelled, perhaps six miles, when the ice broke under one

of the Indians, and he was precipitated into the water; there was a piercing wind to increase the severity of the cold, and no house within reach—the other Indians hastened to the bank and kindled a fire with their best speed, but his feet were frosted before he could have the benefit of it; his companions held him at a moderate distance from the fire, and rubbed his limbs with snow till the circulation returned, and in little more than half an hour he was able to proceed.

"Notwithstanding the pain in my limbs, and the fatigue of drawing my sledge, I could not help remarking on the loveliness of nature peculiar to these northern latitudes, and which seemed sufficient to dissipate every sensation of pain and weariness; such a rare combination of frost and sunshine, without being seen and felt, could hardly be imagined. The wind, which had blown fiercely all the morning, came to a perfect lull in the afternoon; even the deep roar of the pine woods hushed to a gentle murmur—and as we walked along, our hair, our faces, our eye-brows, and even our eye-lashes, were as white as a powdering of snow could make them—while the warmth of the sun gave a sensation of peculiar purity to the air.

"Towards the end of this day's journey, the pain in my limbs and the lameness thereby occasioned, became a serious inconvenience. The inflammation in my feet and ankles was so acute as exactly to resemble the torture of the gout; to set my feet upon the ground was torture, and the slightest twist, when I trod in the holes made in the hard snow by the footsteps of those who went before, increased it—sometimes I was obliged to lie down in the snow, for relief, though the intense cold obliged me to rise almost immediately—I was sometimes tempted to crawl on my hands and knees, but even this motion gave me excessive torture. The poor boy, Frank Scott, was even worse off than myself, if possible, yet the Indians marched on with characteristic indifference, apparently altogether unconscious of our misery.

"Near sunset we reached the top of a hill, at the bottom of which lay the Indian village. The men with us, on seeing their native town, set up a wild and thrilling shout, which instantly communicated our approach to its inhabitants; they came thronging out in great numbers, looking so wild and fearful, that I was excessively frightened. I had heard dreadful stories about prisoners being compelled to run the gauntlet, and other terrible things. However, we were mercifully spared these trials; men, women and children seemed rather to regard us as objects of curiosity than malignancy and hatred; they ran around us, screeching and yelling, while the boldest came very near and examined our hands, our clothes, our hair, and our faces, with the utmost minuteness; the result was probably satisfactory, as some of them, after this, screamed and shouted with the most obstreperous laughter.

"I subsequently ascertained that my master belonged to the Missagou tribe of Indians, perhaps the least attractive of all these wild people, both with regard to their physical and mental endowments; the men are usually of small stature, with the coarsest and most repulsive features—the forehead is low and retreating; the ears large, and standing off from the face; the eyes looking towards the temples, keen, snake-like, and far apart; the cheek bones prominent; the nose long and flat, the nostrils very round; the jaw bone projecting, massy and brutal; the mouth expressing ferocity and sullen determination; the teeth large, even and dazzling white. There is a great difference however, in the countenances of the sexes. The lips of the female are fuller; the jaw less projecting, and the smile simple and agreeable. The women, too, are a merry, light-hearted set, and their constant laugh and incessant prattle form a strange contrast to the iron taciturnity of their grim lords. They surrounded me on all sides, and thus, amidst the noise of their chattering and laughing, the squalling of children and the barking of dogs, I was escorted into the village. This was simply a collection of huts, on the borders of a cedar swamp, and near the shores of a lake, called by the Indians, Umpha, though I am ignorant of the name it bears among the whites; a little farther off was a grove of maples, from which the Indian women made very good sugar. My master, who had recently lost his wife, took me to his wigwam, intending that I should fill her place. It will be readily concluded that I objected to this arrangement, though I willingly consented to prepare his food and keep his wigwam in order, which was no slight job; the Indian, however, was no very ardent wooer, he neither persecuted me with attentions himself or permitted others to do so; he seemed to think that time would reconcile me to their manner of living, in which event I would willingly become his wife. I found several white prisoners, all children, however, who had been adopted into the tribe, and were fast losing, under surrounding influences, all traces of civilization. I was constantly visited by the females, who gave me lessons in all their various accomplishments of basket making, embroidering leggins and moccasins, carving bows, and forming a thousand little ornaments, in which an Indian especially delights. Certain it is, that I was not a very apt scholar; my thoughts were too busy about other things and scenes; I had not forgotten my home, though it was now a heap of ashes—not a day elapsed that I did not revolve in my mind some plan of escape, but I knew the success of my plan depended altogether on my manifesting an appearance of content. I could do nothing while jealously watched and guarded. I soon found that the chiefs and principal men of the tribe were absent on the war-path. I also found that southern emissaries had been among them, to stir them up into rebellion against the United

States; presents of blankets, rifles, ammunition and tobacco had been distributed amongst them by agents of Jefferson Davis, whom they had learned to style their Great Father. They had also experienced many heart-burnings about the payment of their annuities; then, too, the withdrawal of the troops usually stationed on the frontier, afforded them a fine opportunity for revolt. I believe that the first design of the Indians was to hold the prisoners as hostages, demanding a ransom in money or its equivalent, from their relatives or friends—not succeeding in this, their anger was aroused, hence the brutalities they practised upon their helpless victims.

As party after party came in with prisoners, I could not help noticing how differently they were treated. One man, whose name I never learned, but whom the Indians familiarly designated as 'Old Press,' and who was known to them as an active and dangerous enemy, was brought in one day, and they determined to avenge themselves upon him. He had been condemned to the fiery torture, and his body painted black, but by way of a previous amusement, he was manacled hand and foot, securely bound to an unbridled and unbroken horse, and driven off amid the shouts and whoops of the savages; the horse, frightened at his unwonted burden, reared and plunged, pitched and tore, and finding itself unable to shake him off, galloped with terrific speed towards the wood, jarring and bruising the rider at every step; at length, exhausted and subdued, it returned to the camp with its burden, amid the exulting shouts of the savages; they then removed the prisoner from the horse, and tied him to a stake, where, for twenty-four hours he remained in one position; he was then untied to run the gauntlet—several of the women insisted that I should go to witness the sport—the chief's wife, however, with more consideration than the rest, excused me, and rebuked the others.

"Is not the white man her brother?" she asked, looking towards me, "Can you think she desires to see him tortured? How would you like to see your brother's burned?"

"This woman was a mountain of copper-colored flesh, but she had a remarkably good heart, which made her generally beloved, and gave her great influence over the others, though not sufficient to save the poor man. Three hundred Indians, men, women and children, armed with clubs and switches, arranged themselves in two parallel lines, to strike him as he passed; it was more than a mile to the council house, reaching which he was to be spared; he was started by a blow, on this encouraging race, but he soon broke through the files, and had almost reached the goal, when he was brought to the ground by a club—in this position he was beaten with the utmost severity, and again taken into custody. The Indians, however, instead of being satisfied with these

terrible sufferings, were only stimulated to invent more ingenious tortures; still the fortitude of the victim was quite a match for their cruelty. He was compelled to run the gauntlet again and again; he was exposed to insult of every kind, and subjected to all manner of privations and injuries; sometimes he was bound in the most uncomfortable positions; at others he was beaten, pinched, dragged on the ground, and deprived for long periods, of sleep. Many of the females seemed to take delight in rehearsing the story of his sufferings in my hearing—how he would be dragged from village to village, that all might witness, be entertained, and assist in his tortures—but they also bore testimony to the courage and endurance with which he sustained his sufferings, and expressed a conviction that so brave and valiant a man would ultimately escape.

"At last a chief, named the 'Buffalo,' who had been out on a hunting expedition, returned with his party. He was immediately informed that a white prisoner was soon to be led to the stake—he went to see him, and instantly recognized an old friend, with whom he had hunted near the head waters of the Great Missouri, and who had once saved his life from the the spring of a Catamount. The savage made himself known, raised up his old friend, and promised to exert his influence in his behalf; he summoned a council at once, descanted on the courage and fortitude of the prisoner, (qualities which the Indians admire even in an enemy,) and persuaded them to resign their captive to him, after a while they consented; he took the unfortunate man to his wigwam—fed, nursed and cared for him until he completely recovered, when he accompanied him to within a few miles of the white settlements.

"Sometime during the month of February, the Indians brought in a young man, a captive, whom I recognized at once as an old friend and neighbor—and the recognition was mutual—for though both were prisoners, neither was deprived of the use of his or her eyes; then, too, I was much less jealously guarded than at first, and when my master was absent, which was often, we found abundant opportunities for interviews and conversation. Instead of becoming reconciled to the Indian mode of life, I experienced each day a feeling of deeper disgust with all that I saw. The men were brutal, while the most deplorable want of chastity characterised the women. Even the little children were deficient in the usual grace and sweetness of childhood; their amusements all partook of their savage nature, while to moral or intellectual enjoyments they were entire strangers. Their sense of hearing, sight and smell, are much more acute than those of white people, and enables them to distinguish objects at an incredible distance; they would see to distinguish birds in the air so high up that I could not discover the smallest speck; they sometimes heard wild animals crackling and breaking the bushes, and going out with their bows or rifles, would kill and bring

them in, when I failed to hear the faintest sound, though intently listening; many of them would follow a trail by its scent, the same as a hound, and they would easily tell the sex of the wearer by the scent of a garment.

"The Indians are particularly susceptible to little acts of kindness and affection; I soon discovered this, and strove by every means in my power to secure their good will; I have every reason to believe that I succeeded to a great degree. I wished to attach some of them to my person, and engage their friendship and assistance against the time that I should make an attempt to escape.

"There was one young girl of fifteen, a half breed, and truly beautiful, whose history was quite as interesting as her appearance. She was the offspring of misfortune—her father had been drowned by breaking through the ice on one of the Upper Lakes, while out fishing; her mother, a Canadian woman, and quite as bold and courageous as a man, went to his assistance, but not in time to save him, though she succeeded in recovering his body; being near her confinement with this child, the fright and grief brought on premature labor, and she died, leaving her infant to the care of her husband's sister.

The superstitious Indians consider the soul of one that is drowned to be accursed, and according to their belief, he is not permitted to enter the happy hunting-grounds of the immortals. His spirit, on the contrary, is supposed to haunt the lake or river in which he lost his life; his body is buried on some lonely island, which the Indians never pass without leaving a small portion of food, ammunition, or tobacco, to supply his wants; his children are considered unlucky, and few willingly unite themselves to the females of the family, lest a portion of the father's curse should light on them.

"This poor orphan girl generally kept aloof from the rest, never joining the amusements of others of her age, and seeming altogether so lonely and companionless, that my heart was insensibly attracted towards her, and a feeling of hearty sympathy and good will sprang up between us. Her features were small and regular; her face oval, and her large, dark, loving eyes, were full of tenderness and sensibility, but bright and shy as those of the deer; her complexion was a clear olive, suffused on her cheeks and lips with the richest vermillion, while her even and pearly teeth were of dazzling whiteness; her stature was small; her limbs plump and beautifully rounded; her hands and feet delicate, and her figure elastic and graceful. She was altogether a beautiful child of nature, and her name, in the Indian language, signified the frozen water. We often exchanged visits, and finally she came to reside altogether in the cabin of my master. I entrusted her with the secret of my design to escape, and though she wept bitterly at the idea of parting, she said

nothing to dissuade me. Indeed, she promised to render us all the assistance in her power—for it had been already settled that the young man alluded to before, whose name was Hiram Johnson, should accompany me.

"He was a brave, stout, young fellow, thoroughly acquainted with the Indian character, and accustomed to prairie life, and hunting adventures; he had spent some time in the Upper Missouri country, among the Blackfeet and Cassinaboin tribes; he found that in spite of the numerous treaties between them and the Federal Government, a hostile feeling generally prevailed, by which the danger of travelling through that region was greatly augmented; hence, he proposed that we should strike off in a southeasterly direction, in order to reach, if possible, the white settlements on the Minnesota river.

"It was yet in early spring, when the whole Indian village was thrown into the greatest consternation. A runner from the Sioux nation had arrived with information that a detachment of United States troops were on their way to attack and punish all the tribes who had been concerned in the recent outbreak, with the demand that all the prisoners should be at once restored, that too, without ransom.

"It would not, perhaps, be proper to say that the Indians are naturally cowards, but they do fear, more than any other people, a hostile demonstration of regular troops. An immediate council was called; men, women and children ran from place to place, whooping and screaming. Some proposed to kill the prisoners, and then deny all participation in the outrages; others declared, that however feasible this plan might appear, it would not do. It was finally suggested that the whole village should literally pull up stakes and move still farther off. With inexpressible pain I heard the nature of their decision, and at once resolved to escape, if possible. As to accompanying them in their journey, I felt that death would be preferable. I knew instinctively, that there would be great difficulty in pushing forward through a wild and unexplored country, intersected with rivers, lakes and woods—at the outset covered with snow, and on the approach of warmer weather, so flooded and marshy as to render travelling on foot excessively fatiguing. Nor was this all; the voracity, improvidence and indolence of the men, subjected the females to repeated distress. If from fishing or hunting, a larger supply than usual was procured, instead of using it with moderation, and laying up a store for future necessities, all was devoured at once; when the savages, gorged like the boa, coiled themselves up and remained in a state of stupidity until again roused to activity by the calls of hunger.

"For my own part, I had constantly suffered for the want of wholesome provision, as the men always appropriated all the best of the fare,

leaving the bones and refuse for the women. Some times, too, we found it almost impossible to build a fire, in consequence of the moisture from the melting snow, which saturated the brushwood. Usually it was all feasting or all famine; we were often one, two and even three days without food—on these occasions the Indians would examine their wardrobes with the utmost care, in order to decide what part they could best spare, when perhaps, a half rotten deer skin, or a pair of old moccasins would be sacrificed to relieve their extreme hunger. As I could not and would not partake of such delectable dishes, my sufferings admitted less alleviations than did theirs. It is scarcely possible for one to imagine the pangs of hunger, who has not experienced them; and in wandering situations like that now proposed, the hardships is greatly aggravated by the uncertainty with regard to its duration, and the means most proper to be used to remove it, as well as by the labor and fatigue we must necessarily undergo for that purpose, and the disappointments which too often frustrate our best concerted plans and most strenuous exertions. I found, by sad experience, that hunger not only enfeebles the body, but depresses the spirits, in spite of every effort to prevent it. Many a time did my stomach so far lose its digestive powers as only to resume its office with pain and weariness; more than once was I reduced to so low a state by hunger, that when Providence threw any thing in my way, my stomach was only able to retain the smallest portion, without producing the most excessive pain.

"The houses of the Indians, as well as their canoes, being made of skin, and exceedingly light and portable, the removal of a whole village was not an undertaking of any great magnitude. These habitations were so near alike, that a description of one would serve for the whole; that of my master was oval, about fifteen feet long, ten feet wide in the middle, and eight feet at either end. It was dug a few inches below the surface, one half being covered with skins which served as a seat and bed for the family. In the middle of the other half a space about four feet wide, had been hollowed out and was the only place where a full grown man could stand erect. One side of this formed the hearth. The door in one end of the house, was about three feet high by two wide, and consisted simply of a curtain of skins. On the top was an orifice of about eighteen inches square, which served the triple purpose of a window, a chimney, and an occasional door. The covering was of skins stretched on tent poles, the lower ends of which were fastened in the ground, while the upper was lashed to a stick bent so as to form a bow.

"When preparing for removal, these coverings are taken off, the poles loosened from the earth, and all firmly lashed together. Sometimes sledges are provided on which the whole is mounted, together

with pots, kettles, pans, canoes, and such provisions, ammunition and tobacco, as they happen to have on hand. At other times all this luggage is carried upon the backs of the women, the girls and the dogs; among whom it is very equally apportioned, according to the strength of the bearer.

"Being well aware that I should have to carry my master's tent, all the furniture and cooking utensils that it contained, or drag the sledge on which they were placed, I determined to clope that very night, though I was really half starved and nearly naked. I had not learned to prepare the deer skin clothing used by the Indians at this season, and even if I had it is very doubtful whether my master would have furnished me with the skins; as he had taken great umbrage because I steadfastly refused to become his wife,—I sometimes thought that he delighted in subjecting me to hardships and indignities. The only clothing he ever allowed me was his own worn out and cast off apparel, with an old blanket which had served his favorite dog for a bed, until it sickened and died.

"During my sojourn among the Indians, I had accidentally discovered a small opening in the side of a hill, which ran along the borders of the lake, at the distance of a mile from the village. This opening I had once entered, crawling on my hands and knees, until it expanded into an apartment of considerable extent. I felt certain that the Indians were ignorant of its existence, as I had never heard it alluded to by them, hence, I conceived the idea of hiding there a few days, until the ardour of pursuit should be past. Johnson, however, opposed this measure, 'We should certainly be discovered,' he said, 'and taken in which event our sufferings would be greatly augmented.'

"I did not readily understand how this could be, so far as I was concerned, and I told him so; told him likewise, that he could do as he liked, but my resolution was taken that I would escape that night. Luckily my master brought in a deer during the afternoon, and as I was called upon to dress it, I took good care to appropriate a large portion to myself; I also took spears, arrow-heads, fish-hooks, a knife, a tomahawk; an apparatus for striking fire, and sundry other articles, that I conjectured would be useful on my long and adventurous journey.

"Early in the afternoon, the south-wind began to blow, which the Indians declared was the fore-runner of a thaw; and a thaw just then they dreaded, as it would seriously interfere with their plans of removing. Simultaneous with this, another runner from the Sioux, brought intelligence that several of the Chiefs and head men, who had been prominent actors in the massacre of the whites, had been taken prisoners; tried by court-martial and civil processes, and condemned to be hung. He also asserted, that the United States authorities were making every ex-

ertion to find out and arrest such others, as had been guilty of the same crime. This news gave them all a new start, and though it began to rain tremendously, and every thing was just as wet as it could be, the preparations went on with alacrity. They had taken the precaution of sending a small party in advance, to open the way, and to ascertain that there was no danger or impediment in the route they had chosen. They certainly feared the white man; all their talk was of white men their power and their cruelties;

"Some one in my hearing proposed sending a deputation to the whites, entreating their forbearance and asking peace. For a few minutes after this, intense silence prevailed, when an old Chief perhaps eighty years of age, uttered his dissent in something like the following words.

"I am for war, war to the knife! My rifle is true to its aim, my tomahawk is sharp! I have taken many scalps in my younger days, I can still take more. White men are great liars! White men kill Indian just as they kill deer? White men see squaw, they shoot her right down; shoot papoose the same as rabbit! I no like White men, white men no like me!"

"When he had finished, another chief related his grievances as follows:

"I once had a son," he said, "a son who was a brave chief, and so kind to his old father and mother, that he hunted game for them to eat; one day he was out hunting deer, and the rifle of the white man killed him—the sun set; the night came, still he had not returned; his mother, unable to sleep, went to look for her son—she followed his trail a long way through the thick bushes—at the dawn of day the mother and son were both gone, and the old chief was very lonely; he went out to look for his wife and child—he found them both, but both were dead; the white man's bullet had pierced their bosoms; the white man's knife had tore the scalp from their heads! Ask me not to make peace with the white man!"

"I felt my cheeks burn, and the blood tingle in my veins. I knew these accusations were in a great part true; I knew that many wanton and unprovoked outrages had been inflicted upon them. No one could have blamed them for repelling their assailants; but the wholesale massacre of innocent and defenceless families, was quite another thing, so was their practice of condemning poor little captive children to starvation; many a time have I seen these innocents, who had been carried off from their parents, almost in a state of nudity, digging in the snow with their fingers, for grass-nuts, or any roots, to afford sustenance. No more piteous sight was ever beheld than those naked infants in bitter old weather, on the open snow, reduced by starvation to living skeletons, with the certainty that in the event of their death, they would be thrown out in the wilderness for the wolves to devour.

"Those who prate of the beauties of a state of nature, should live among the Indians and see savage life as I have seen it, I think they would become quite as disgusted with it as I did.

"It was sometime past midnight when the cavalcade took up its line of march. The night was intensely dark, and a steady rain falling, prevented the use of torches. It was utterly impossible to see the least thing; but the concert of strange sounds, gabbling, whooping, yelling, children squalling, and dogs barking, was perfectly deafening. Wrapped in their blankets and furs, and maintaining the utmost gravity and sedateness, the men went first—the women and children, with the baggage, bringing up the rear; my friend, the orphan girl, had volunteered to drag my sledge, and I knew that in the darkness it was impossible that I should be missed, still it was not without misgivings that I fell behind and suffered the company to go on, leaving me alone in the woods. In my anxiety to escape, I had scarcely calculated on the thousand dangers with which I should be environed when once left to my own resources; now a conviction of the whole almost overpowered me—it was but a moment, however; I felt that I was in the hands of an Almighty Protector, who cared, 'even for the fall of a sparrow,' I would confide myself to him, not doubting that he would eventually guide me in safety to my friends.

"Of my fellow prisoner, Johnson, I knew nothing. Two days had elapsed since I had seen him. I should not be missed before the morning, possibly not then, still I felt assured that when he once discovered my absence, he would seek me at the cave. In the cave, therefore, I determined to remain for a few days. But the first difficulty was to get there, and in the darkness I was not sure of my course.

"The first thing upon attempting to move, I stumbled over a large basswood log, I recollected seeing this before, and knew that it was hollow; here, then, I might obtain shelter from the storm, at least for that night. I crept within it, and notwithstanding my agitation and anxiety, soon fell asleep. When I awoke next morning, the sun was shining, and the weather having greatly moderated during the night, was really pleasant. I felt the necessity of the greatest caution, as there are always more or less stragglers left behind, who stay to gather up such fragments as have been either lost or accidentally mislaid. On this occasion, however, the fear of the white men seems to have prevented all wish or desire in any one to remain behind. Before peering out, I listened intently; not a sound was to be heard but the voices of nature—the deep, hollow murmuring of the woods—the distant roar of the water-fall and the chirping of some early spring birds. Encouraged by the silence, I ventured to leave the place of my concealment, and proceeded with trembling steps towards the cave, anxiously looking

around, and often starting, as the breeze rustled amongst the trees, mistaking it for the whisperings of men.

"The snow had all departed, and many little streams which emptied into the lake, were running briskly. Knowing the Indian skill in following a trail, I immediately entered the water, and walked in it a considerable distance; at length emerging near the entrance of the cave, and taking another survey of the woods, to make sure that I was not watched, I cautiously secreted myself therein; all was perfectly dark, and the chilly air made me shake as with the ague. I had all the materials for kindling a fire, but feared to use them, lest the smoke might attract my enemies. I felt around and found a small cache of provisions, which I had almost starved myself to save, in anticipation of this period. I ate but sparingly, wishing to reserve as much as possible for future use. I remained in the cavern that day and night, without seeing any one, and, Oh! how tedious the time appeared. I could not sleep all the time; I feared to move in the darkness, lest I might get bewildered and lost; I had no resources of reading or conversation, and my thoughts were not the most agreeable; however, I was on my way to home and freedom. I could not remain patiently where I was and determined if nothing happened to prevent, to resume my journey next morning, with, or without the company of Johnson.

"When morning came my resolution was unshaken, and the cheerful beams of the sun, playing on my sight, re-animated my spirits; I gathered all my provisions, and whatever I designed to take with me in a small bundle, and came out into the open air; here I stood for a few minutes, listening, but no sound met my ear, save the sighing of the wind among the trees. I passed around to the borders of the lake without seeing any person, and everything looked exactly as I had last seen it; it was evident no one had been there, then I paused, and looking at the sun made a mental calculation of the route I should take to reach the nearest white settlement. Again, I looked around to make certain that no one was following, and this time saw—heaven help me—an Indian whom I instantly recognised to be my master; I neither screamed nor fainted, but stood like one petrified with horror and amazement. His back was towards me, and from his manner and attitude I felt certain that he had not discovered my presence, but how long could this continue; the least noise on my part would certainly attract his attention, even were it no more than the rustling of leaves or the breaking of a twig. To remain where I was, would be attended with almost certain discovery; to attempt concealment, was almost equally so; what then could I do?

"While standing thus irresolute, the crack of a rifle resounded through the forest, and the Indian fell; a ball having penetrated his

brain. Without waiting to ascertain whether a friend or foe was near, I turned and fled; fear lending wings to my steps, neither did I venture to look back, though a voice called upon me to stop, and I heard steps advancing in quick pursuit. Before I could reach the cavern my breath failed, and I leaned against a tree for support; the man came up and gazed upon me with a strong expression of curiosity and surprise. He assumed a gentle manner, assured me I had nothing to fear from him, and inquired if I had escaped from the Indians; I was really too terrified and out of breath to speak, when he continued his questions and assurances.

"'You have nothing to fear from me,' he said, 'and if I can render you any assistance, I shall be only too happy to do so, was this devil back here looking for you?' he continued, 'let me lift his hair, and then we'll be jogging; that is, if you do not object to my company.'

"Turning back to where the Indian was laying dead, he tore off his reeking scalp before I had time to remonstrate, cut and bent a bow, and placed the skin upon it in exact Indian fashion. I closed my eyes with a sickening sensation of horror.

"'It's just what he would have done by me, had the opportunity offered' he remarked, by way of apology, 'but I think the sooner we leave this place the better for both of us; this way madam,' and he struck off through the woods.

"We travelled for some time in perfect silence, and I had ample opportunity to mark the features and manners of my preserver. He was dressed in hunting costume which well became his athletic form, he had a roman nose, with a fine intelligent countenance, and his thick black hair was brushed off his high and expansive forehead. At last he stopped suddenly and turning his face full upon mine, asked.

"'Where do you wish to go, young woman?'

"'Almost anywhere among white people,' I answered; 'my mother, my sister, and my brothers were slain; I am without relatives altogether, but I trust that the story of my misfortunes will find me friends.'

"'It certainly ought to,' replied the man, 'but now you stay right here,' he continued, 'behind the shadow of this rock while I go back.'

"'What for?' I asked involuntarily.

"'To strip that red-skin.'

"'And bury him.'

"'No indeed; the wolves may pick his bones for all I care, but he has a rifle and a tomahawk, the very things for you to have.'

"I thanked him for the interest he took in my welfare, concealed myself behind the rock, and waited patiently for his return. In a remarkably short time he came, bringing the weapons and ammunition of

the fallen warrior. These he gave to me, bidding me keep a good heart, and use them, if necessary, for my safety.

"That night he told me his story. It was almost identical with that of hundreds of others. He had been one of an exploring party, and went out to shoot deer; some of the Sioux Indians were shooting ducks, and hearing the explosion of fire-arms, they marked the direction and followed the white men to their camp. They were most inveterate beggars, and stole whatever they could lay their hands on. The white men ordered them out, and force was used to take away their fire-arms. In the scuffle one of the Americans was severely wounded with a knife, and some of the Indians were killed; the survivors sought their camp, made a fictitious scalp of horse-hair, which they erected on a pole, and commenced the war-dance. The other Indians joined, until finally, wrought up to a pitch of the greatest fury, they sallied out, sought the white men's camp, which they attacked while the party were breakfasting, under cover of the willows, which grew on the banks of the creek. Captain Engleson the leader, was the first man who had finished his breakfast; he arose, and while speaking to his men, the Indians with a tremendous yell fired upon them. Captain Engleson raised his hands and beckoned them to stop; the men immediately fled, only one man fell by the first fire of the Indians; the men's first endeavors were to reach their horses, the Indians pursued and shot them; the whole party with the exception of this one man was exterminated; he was severely wounded, and crawled off into a hollow, where the Indians found him two or three days after the massacre.

"A large body of Emigrants was encamped a short distance off. They heard the firing, and a company of horsemen galloped to the scene of action, in the fierce expectation of offensive warfare.

"They arrived on the spot; they saw the mutilated remains of the white men, but no signs of Indians. The weather was very cold, the ground frozen hard; they had nothing with them but their swords to dig into the frozen earth and were thus compelled to leave the dead unburied. Months after this their bones were seen bleaching on the prairie, a hideous monument of Indian atrocity.

"My companion whose name was Webb, related all this, though not in the exact language which I have used.

"'But how did you manage to escape?' I asked when he had concluded.

"'I watched for an opportunity the same as yourself,' he answered, 'though it was some time before one offered, I was so jealously guarded. At last their vigilance somewhat relaxed. I was sent out to hunt accompanied by two Indians; one of these I shot when his back was towards me; the other I assailed and knocked down with the butt end of my rifle. You will readily believe, that I didn't leave him while

breath was in his body, and that the grass didn't grow under my feet when I had got his scalp.'

"How long ago was this?' I asked.

"Six weeks to-morrow.'

"And since that time you have been like myself a wanderer in the woods.'

"Something of the kind, I must confess' he replied.

"Have you been without fire all this time?' I inquired, for it seemed to me then, that warmth was the greatest blessing on earth.

"Not quite,' he answered.

"And think you we can have a fire to-morrow night?' I asked, with something of anxiety as to the answer.

"That depends altogether upon our situation, and whether there are Indians in the neighborhood.'

"Are there Indians near us now?'

"Not very far off I discovered signs of them this afternoon.'

"And didn't tell me.'

"I feared you would be alarmed.'

"And so I should. The very thought of being made their prisoner again, thrills me with horror.'

"You never shall be while I live,' he answered.

"And thus we talked nearly the whole night, as the cold prevented our sleeping, and we feared to make a fire lest the smoke should betray our hiding-place.

"In this climate a thaw usually lasts a few days, when the cold returns with redoubled vigor. The next morning we found this exemplified. The snow commenced falling, and the wind blew a perfect hurricane. In consequence of the fleecy drift we could only see a few feet ahead, while the violence of the wind almost carried us off our legs. The snow soon increased to such a depth that walking became both difficult and painful. Webb proposed to encamp under the shelter of a little wood; I could offer no objections, and while we were making preparations, an Indian woman suddenly appeared. We both stood on the defensive, but she gave us to understand by signs, that she was quite alone and friendly. Webb who partly understood her language, assured me that I had nothing to fear, and when she tendered us her hospitality he cheerfully accepted it. We followed her to a wild part of the country, remote from any human habitation, where was a small hut in which she had lived for many months entirely alone. She recounted with affecting simplicity the circumstances, which had induced her to dwell in solitude. She belonged she said, to the Mohahoe Indians, and during an inroad of the Sioux, in 1861, had been taken prisoner; the savages, according to their usual custom, stole upon the tents in the



"While slung thus irresolute, the crack of a rifle resounded through the forest, and two Indian fell, a ball having penetrated his brain."—See Page 44

night, and murdered before her face, her entire family, father, mother, brothers, sisters and husband, while she and another young woman were reserved from the slaughter and made prisoners. Her child, an infant a few months old, she managed to conceal in some clothing, but on arriving at the place where the women was, it was discovered and immediately killed.

"This horrid cruelty had nearly upset her reason, and she made a solemn vow to escape the first opportunity, and return to her own nation; but the great distance and the innumerable creeks and rivers she had to pass, caused her to lose the way, and winter coming on she built a hut, and lived happy and contented. At this time she was the finest Indian woman I had ever seen, in good health and well fed. Her cabin was very comfortable, and she had snow shoes and other useful articles, all the produce of her own industry. For subsistence she snared partridges, squirrels and rabbits, and had killed two or three deer and some beaver. From the sinews of their legs, she twisted thread with great dexterity, which she employed in sewing her clothing, and making snares. This clothing was formed of rabbit's skins sewed together; the materials, though rude, being tastefully disposed, so as to make her garb assume a pleasing though desert-bred appearance.

"No sooner had we reached her habitation, than she set about preparing us something to eat, and though her cookery was of the rudest kind, the food was nourishing and palatable. So well were we both pleased with our amiable hostess, that Webb proposed remaining till the spring broke. Providence however had determined otherwise.

"On the third day after our arrival, she went out as usual to attend to her snares, but returned almost immediately, her limbs trembling, and her countenance blanched with consternation. A party of her old enemies, the Sioux, were encamped less than half a mile off. She did not think they had discovered her as yet, though how soon they might she could not tell. She evidently considered it unsafe to remain in that neighborhood and proposed an immediate departure; I invited her to go with us. Webb insisted and she finally consented; I really considered her a great acquisition, and felt much safer in her company. She had a small sledge of her own construction, on which her property side by side with mine was placed. Being light it scarcely impeded her progress in the least and she went ahead, wearing her snow-shoes with the ease and agility of a man. Although she said not a word I could readily divine her purpose; she thought our safety lay not so much in precipitate flight, as in reaching some stream or river, down which we could pass in a boat, thus leaving no trail behind us. Even Webb could not keep up with her, I did not begin to try. When by looking back she could see us no longer, she would set down at the foot of a tree, and wait till we came up.

"Thus we journeyed two days, resting at night in a shelter which the red woman formed by placing her sledge in an upright position, supported by strips of bark. On the third day, towards evening, we found ourselves in a wild valley, which neither of my companions had ever seen before. The red woman, ahead, as usual, paused suddenly, her countenance expressive of alarm—Webb soon approached her, when she informed him that she heard sticks cracking behind us, and was confident that Indians were near; Webb, being an experienced hunter, and from habit grown indifferent to the dangers of the woods, diverted himself pretty freely at her expense; the woman, whose Indian name was Sunny Eye, was not so easily satisfied—she declared that in whatever direction she turned, the same ominous sounds continued to haunt her, and as Webb treated her fears with the most perfect indifference, she determined to act upon her own responsibility; gradually slackening her pace, until I came up, she motioned me to conceal myself in a dense thicket of dwarf cedars, that grew near by, and immediately afterwards she suddenly sprung aside and disappeared between the banks of a deep ravine.

"Scarcely was this accomplished, when to my unspeakable terror I beheld two savages put aside the branches of some whortleberry bushes and look out cautiously in the direction Webb had taken. Though I never had skill in fire-arms, I raised my rifle, and it exploded. The act was one of madness, and I quickly repented my temerity; both savages sprang towards me with uplifted tomahawks—the motion was seen by the Sunny Eye, who raised her rifle and fired, while I ran away through the bushes—one of the Indians fell severely wounded, and the other one started after her; Webb, however, who had heard the firing, was coming back, and seeing the Indian, sent a bullet through his breast. Thus, we were fortunately preserved from this danger, still we could not feel safe. In every shadow we feared a foeman; behind every bush we anticipated a lurking enemy; the most ordinary sounds, the cry of a panther, the howl of a wolf, or the hooting of an owl, seemed ominous of danger; still we pressed on bravely, always hoping for the best.

"The next day we came to a region that bore in all its parts, the marks of Indian outrages. Cabins deserted and burned; plantations laid waste; the mouldering remains of cattle and horses; hogs and poultry running wild; the fair country once teeming with life and industry, now entirely desolate. At one place, near the banks of a small river, a battle had been fought, and the snow, beat and trampled by the wolves, did not altogether hide the mangled and mutilated remains of the dead. While yet lingering here, we observed a thicket of low bushes to shake violently, and the next moment the face of a white man peered anxiously out.

Webb advanced towards him, when he crawled still nearer, drawing his limbs painfully after him, and it soon became apparent that he had been most fearfully wounded in the engagement that had recently taken place.

"It seemed that the inhabitants, hearing of the hostile approach of the Indians, had met and determined on self defence; they were badly defeated, however, not from want of bravery, but the overwhelming superiority of numbers. The white men were but a small party of undisciplined farmers, and half grown boys; the Indians numbered a large party of experienced warriors. The result might have been foreseen; it was in every respect disastrous. The whites gave way; they were pursued by the savages with the utmost eagerness. The river was filled with cakes and lumps of floating ice, and very difficult to cross; many were killed in the attempt and many more were taken prisoners; a fate worse than death. Some escaped on horseback, others on foot and in a few hours the melancholy news filled the whole country with consternation. Meanwhile, the Indians were spreading destruction on all sides; mangling and mutilating the slain, and torturing the living.

"And how did you escape?" inquired Webb, when the wounded man had finished his story.

"That I can hardly tell, myself," he answered, "though in the uproar and confusion incident to the fight I managed to get away somehow, but you had better not stay here any longer than is absolutely necessary," he said, glancing curiously around, "it is impossible to tell what eyes may be looking for us now."

"And what will become of you," asked Webb, gazing upon the battered frame of the pioneer; it is very evident that you cannot walk."

"Walk no; I shall never walk again; I expect to stay where I am, and die of my wounds when the time comes; well, I don't care; we must all die sometime, and a few years sooner or later can make little difference; I have neither wife nor child; the Indians killed them; I am alone in the world."

"I don't see how you have managed to subsist," said Webb.

"Easily enough," returned the other "I am not particular and dead animals are laying all around; don't you see?"

"Webb did see, and not being very fastidious himself, the idea of sharing a meal with the dogs and vultures, did not strike him as particularly horrible or unpleasant.

"But we cannot leave you here to die all alone," I said; "it would be little better than murder."

"White man go," said Sunny Eye, pointing to her sledge.

"Yes, you must mount that sledge and go with us," I exclaimed, "no hesitation, no refusal, we will not hear it."

"To be dragged by women," ejaculated the Pioneer, "never."

"Rather than you should perish here, I will drag you myself," said Webb.

"Oh, very well, then; but women are women, and I could never think of taxing their strength."

"It required our united exertions to get him upon the sledge. His wounds, when examined, seemed to be doing well, though had he been less hardy, less sound in health and constitution, and also less comfortably protected by fur clothing, he would certainly have perished before our finding him."

"Sunny Eye, however, persisted in dragging the sledge.

"Man can't, don't know how," she said.

It was decided to let her have her own way.

"It was decided, too, that it would be much better, perhaps safer, to float down the river, but we had no boat, and though the Sunny Eye possessed the materials, and could very well have constructed one of sufficient size and strength to have merely crossed a stream, but one to bear a long voyage, and laden, too, was quite another thing.

"So far, we had fared pretty well for food, and my strength had held out a great deal better than I expected that it would. Game had been tolerable plenty, and we had managed to kill enough to make us comfortable, could we have seasoned and prepared it rightly. Still, I felt my strength gradually departing; the cold and the exposure—the constant fatigue and weariness, was telling badly upon my frame. One of my feet was frozen, and I walked with pain and great difficulty. On this occasion my lameness had so increased, that I was always far behind, and my energy and firmness almost deserted me. Night approached, and we looked in vain for a place of shelter—naught but a desert waste of eternal snow met our anxious gaze. Faint, and almost exhausted, I sat down on the snow bank, my feet resting in the tracks of those who had gone before; I was seriously revolving in my mind whether I would go farther, or set still and die where I was: even then I felt a sleepiness stealing over me, and knew that sleep would end in that eternal repose which wakes only in another world.

"Suddenly I heard my name called; this aroused me, and once fairly aroused, I felt the wickedness and folly of the act I had been meditating. My life was not my own, to throw away; I was in the hands of God, who in his own good time would take me to himself, or restore me to my friends. I arose hastily, breathing a mental prayer; Webb was coming back on the trail, and it was his voice I had heard.

"It was now dusk, the cold had much increased, and a fearful snow storm was setting in.

"Again he called my name; it appeared he had not yet discovered me, and this time I answered.

"Oh, there you are!" he exclaimed, 'We feared you had wandered off and got lost somewhere. Please walk a little faster, can you? I have good news.'

"Ah! what is it?"

"We have found a good, comfortable house down yonder, all ready furnished, with beds, provisions and every thing necessary.'

"Why, how strange!"

"The inhabitants must have fled in their fear of the Indians; fled too precipitately to remove their goods.'

"And the Indians never went there?"

"Not at all. But such things often happen; I remember once when the news came of an Indian outbreak, in the Black Hawk War, the frontier inhabitants hurried off in such speed, that some left candles burning on their tables; supper half eaten, upon the plates, and the bread half baked, in the oven.'

"It is not to be wondered at—there is nothing so terrible as these Indian massacres,' I answered.

"It was now quite dark, though I could just discern a light faintly glimmering through a pine grove, at a little distance ahead.

"Webb saw it, too.

"How careless!" he exclaimed, 'They should have darkened the window and stopped all the holes, before kindling a fire. That would serve as a beacon light to guide the Indians to us, for miles.'

"We hurried along as fast as I was able to go for my lameness. At length Webb spoke.

"I hope you had no notion of giving out?"

"I did not answer him directly, but only inquired what made him think that I had.

"Oh, I can guess pretty well when one is low-spirited and desponding.'

"Well, you cannot wonder that I am so?"

"Oh no; you, as well as the rest of us, have been exposed to uncommon hardships: and he went on to descant on the prospect of our soon arriving at some settlement, and the necessity there was for mutual encouragement, instead of vain regrets and despondency; the difficulties were to be met, and it depended on ourselves whether we should return to our friends or perish in the wilderness.'

"He said that nothing in all his life had so fully confirmed his belief



"The next instant a dreadful apprehension seized me—a mingled cry of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and apprehension, broke from my lips"—See Page 65.

an overruling Providence, as our coming so opportunely upon that house, filled as it was with every needful comfort.

"I felt the force of his remarks, and determined for the future, to place my trust more entirely in heaven.

"We reached the house and entered. Sunny Eye had already built a good fire, from the wood which lay in one corner of the fire-place. Oh, how comfortable it seemed; how unlike anything I had realized since my captivity; still, so great was the pain of my frozen limbs on coming near the fire, that I immediately retired to bed, thinking it would be impossible for me to proceed the next day; nor was any refreshment from sleep to be expected. Sunny Eye prepared supper, but I could not eat; the pain actually made me sick at my stomach. The moment her culinary operations were over, Sunny Eye left the house without saying a word—she was gone so long, we began to fear some misfortune had happened to her; we could hear the distant howling of wolves, and at this season of the year they are particularly ferocious. Could it be possible she had fallen a victim to their hunger?"

"No, no!" said Webb, "Not the least danger of that, she'll take care of herself, never you fear."

"But where can she have gone?"

"It is impossible to say."

"I hope she has not deserted us."

"So do I, yet I have heard of such things."

"She cannot have become offended?"

"We have given her no cause, at any rate."

"The door opened very quietly, and the Indian woman came in just as she had gone out, so still, silent and reserved, that no one appeared to notice her.

"Yet I did notice her, and I saw at once that she carried an armful of roots and simples, from which she instantly set about preparing a decoction.

"I guessed her purpose.

"Is that for me?" I asked.

"She made a gesture of assent; for though she could understand my language tolerably well, hers was the same as Greek to me.

"Webb and his companion sat smoking in silence, and finally dropped off to sleep; while she busied herself in preparing the remedy. How she did it, or what were the ingredients, I do not know. When it was ready, she spread it on a piece of untanned deer skin, and bound it closely around my aching limbs: it acted like a charm—I experienced instantaneous relief, and fell at once into a pleasant slumber.

"How long this lasted, I cannot tell, but I was awakened suddenly, by the discharge of a rifle, which produced a most tremendous explosion;

the sound reverberated along the rocks and was re-echoed by the valley. Instantly we were all up, and the word, 'Indians,' was on every tongue. Listening intently, we soon became conscious of other sounds—the distant gallop of a horse, and the most terrific howling of wolves, that seemed to approach nearer and nearer.

"What could it mean?" I looked at Webb for a solution.

"Some benighted traveler is being pursued by the wolves!" he exclaimed, "They are ravenous with hunger."

"Oh, heaven!"

"It is even so."

"What can we do to assist him?"

"That would be hard to tell."

"Nearer and nearer came the sounds. The wolves howling and yelping in full chorus.

"Oh! something must be done," I cried, really alarmed at the impending fate of the traveler."

"Webb took his rifle and sallied out; Sunny Eye uttered a characteristic expression of contempt, rushed to the fire, and the next minute returned, with her hands full of blazing torches. A few feet from the door there was a bare place, whence the wind had blown the snow, banking it up a short distance off—stooping there, she laid the torches, and bringing more fuel, soon had a bright, clear blaze.

"Wolf no come near," she murmured to herself, 'Wolf 'fraid of burn.'

"By this time the horseman could just be discerned, like a dark shadow in the distance; he was apparently urging on his steed with both whip and voice, and close behind were the wolves, a most formidable pack, baying, yelling and howling in their ravenous blood-thirstiness.

"On they came, near, still nearer, till the man reined up his steed between the fire and the house. The wolves, frightened by the proximity of fire, the shouts of Webb and the discharge of fire-arms, fell back, and finally slunk away.

"The stranger dismounted, loosened his horses rein and removed his saddle; the poor beast was well nigh overcome with the fright and labor; he trembled in every limb, and great drops of sweat rolled off him, while he flung the flecks of foam from his bridle-bits.

"Well, stranger, you've had rather a narrow escape," said Webb, approaching, rifle in hand.

"Indeed, I had."

"There was something in the voice that thrilled through and through me; I had not seen the man to distinguish his face or features,—but those tones, they awoke a whole world of recollection; I had returned into the house and lain down, but no bed could hold me then—rising, I

went to the door, just in time to hear Webb direct the stranger's attention to the stable, which stood at the end of the house; though separated from it by a narrow yard, I could hear their voices in earnest conversation, and every moment seemed to confirm me more and more in my first impressions. I grew anxious and impatient. Would they never come in? How long they were loitering there. Could I be mistaken? They were coming! I heard their footsteps. In my weakened and enfeebled state, the rush of contending emotions had well nigh overwhelmed me. They came in: I raised my eyes to the face of the stranger—it was indeed the one I had most wished to see; the next instant a dreadful apprehension seized me—a mingled cry of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and apprehension, broke from my lips.

"My brother! my brother! but where is Tom?"

"Had he not caught me in his arms, I should have fallen to the floor.

"Why, Ann, is it possible that this is you?" and he held me off at arms length, surveying my form and features.

"Am I then so changed?"

"Changed! I should never have known you, my poor, poor sister, how you must have suffered?"

"Everything but death."

"Again and again we embraced each other.

"I had feared never to see you again."

"But where is Tom?"

"Don't ask me, Ann; the subject gives me intense pain."

"I can guess the reason—he is dead?"

"He is!"

"Butchered by the Indians?"

"Yes! literally butchered; but don't ask me the particulars, don't!" and he made a gesture of putting something terribly painful away from him.

"How can I help asking you, when he was my own dear brother, and when I should so like to know how and where he died?"

"He paid no attention to what I said, only looked at Webb, and began talking to him of the weather and our prospects of getting back to some civilized settlement. But I would not be put off—I would know the history of his adventures, and where and how my brother died. The arrival of John and the incidents therewith connected, had driven sleep from all our eye-lids. The pain and lameness had also departed from my limbs. Taking my brother's hand, and drawing him to a seat by my side, I asked him to relate the story of his adventures.

"Not till you answer me one question," he answered.

"I will answer a dozen, if you desire it."

"Why is that Indian woman there, are you not afraid of her treachery?"

"Not in the least."

"We then related how and where we had found her, with the great use she had been to us.

"It's probably all right, then," he answered, and he began his narrative.

"You recollect our separation, and the large party of Indians that accompanied us?"

"I assented."

"Well, for some time we travelled due west, by the most fatiguing marches, through a mountainous wilderness; the mounted Indians tied the wretched captives to their saddle-girths, and compelled them to keep up with the horses or be dragged upon the snow. We experienced the most uncomfortable weather, and being thinly clad, our sufferings were terrible. On the third day, the Indians, concluding that there was no danger of pursuit, made preparations to encamp, and began to hunt and reconnoitre the country. Here we remained several days, all the time closely guarded, though it was our policy not to show any uneasiness or desire to escape; our wounds were healed considerably, but the savages were excessively cruel, and seemed to delight in tormenting us. At length some news arrived which frightened them, and they commenced a precipitate removal, plunging still farther into the wilderness. I shall not attempt to describe the horrors of that march, or the sufferings we all endured; we were also made to understand that worse tortures awaited us when we arrived at the Indian villages, hence we determined to escape the first favorable opportunity. It was not long in offering; and one dark night, as we lay in a thick cedar grove, by a large fire, when sleep had locked up their senses, my situation not disposing me to rest, I touched my brother and awoke him; without a word he understood me, and we departed, leaving them to take their rest, and directed our course towards our old home."

"I know just how you must have felt," I interrupted, "since I have experienced the same situation."

"I trust your enterprise was not so fool-hardy as ours proved to be," he answered. "Even now I blame myself, that we did not wait with more patience for a safer time. The snow afforded them every facility for following our trail; before noon of the next day they came up with us. It would have been utter madness to have resisted them, and so we quietly yielded ourselves into their hands."

"What a dreadful disappointment!"

"We found it something worse. The Indians always resent the attempted escape of a captive as a bitter and deep offence. To fail, is

to be subjected to all the horrors of Indian barbarity. We soon found that one or the other was to be made a victim; the fate fell upon Thomas. Don't ask me how he died. Don't! I cannot tell."

"Covering his face with his hands, his whole frame trembling with excess of emotion, John remained for several minutes in perfect silence, broken only by my sobs; I was weeping—I could not help it. That the fate of my brother had been horrible, I well knew; that the same fate did not await the rest of us, was not by any means certain. At length Webb spoke.

"It didn't hinder your trying to escape again?" he said.

"No; it did not."

"But the last time you waited until the snow had disappeared, when your trail would be less easily found?" said Webb.

"I did; nor was this all, I took their fleetest horse; still my way thus far has been beset with dangers, and there can be no safety till the savages are exterminated. We are not in safety here. The light of that fire, which attracted me, might also attract the Indians, have you thought of this?"

"We thought of it very early in the evening," I answered, "But, oh! how glad I am that we let it alone; had it been otherwise, the wolves would most probably have devoured you; your horse could not have held out much longer."

"Not a mile farther!"

"How long had been your race?" asked Webb.

"It was about dusk, when riding through a dark and lonesome valley, I heard the howl of a wolf—I stopped and listened, thinking that perhaps some Indians were on my track and that this was their signal; I was still more convinced of this, when the sounds were repeated from all quarters of the forest. Of the wolves themselves, I had no fear, but I could not say that of the wild men. Determining to sell my life as dearly as possible, and never be taken alive, (my poor brother's fate had warned me of that,) I rode on; still the sounds grew nearer; my horse soon grew uneasy, snuffed the air, and otherwise manifested the utmost trepidation; all of a sudden, he broke into a fierce gallop, and looking back I could just discern some dark objects moving through the bushes at a short distance."

"The wolves?"

"Of course they were, and now I understood the kind of danger I was to meet. My horse understood it, too, and a steed never behaved more gallantly: it was a terrible race; out we came into the open plain, the pursuers and the pursued. Far ahead, I saw a light faintly glimmering like a star, I knew at once it proceeded from a human habitation, instead of a camp fire in the open air."

"Didn't you fire a rifle?"

"I did; while I was watching the light, a huge black wolf, separated from the rest and sprang at my horse's throat; I placed the muzzle of my rifle almost against the head of the monster, it was so near, and fired: the wolf went down, and for a few minutes the rest of the gang stopped, snapping and snarling at each other, while they tore to pieces and devoured the one I had killed."

"Do you suppose there are Indians in the neighborhood, now?" asked Webb, willing to change the subject.

"They cannot be very far off," was the answer, "But why do you ask?"

"Because we thought of staying here and resting a few days, your sister there requires it."

"Still, I would not by any means advise it; the sooner you can get away the better."

"And you will go with us?" I asked.

"Of course I shall," he answered.

"If we only had a boat?" said Webb, "we might float down the current of the river, and the difficulties and dangers of our journey would be greatly lessened."

"Unless I am greatly mistaken, there is a good boat hidden in a thicket, not ten miles from here."

"And you know where it is?"

"I know where it was."

"We will go and look for it in the morning."

"Why not to-night? I have no inclination to sleep."

"Well, to-night, then."

"Here I interposed. My brother was just restored to me, and I could not bear to lose sight of him again."

"Why not wait till morning, our line of march to-morrow probably lies that way; we can then all go together—if the boat is there, use it, if it is not there, no time will be lost, we can go on without it."

"This reasoning decided them; it was postponed till the morning."

"When the morning came, we all felt strengthened and refreshed. A comfortable lodging and a warm breakfast had wrought wonders on our frames. How we longed to remain, and durst not, it is impossible to describe. Long and lingering were the looks I cast behind me, as the dwelling receded from view, with only the desolate white waste of snow spread out in front. John had insisted that I should mount his horse, while he walked on foot, and notwithstanding the unfortunate circumstances of our company, and our dangerous situation, as surrounded by hostile savages, our meeting so fortunately in the wilderness, made us reciprocally sensible of the utmost satisfaction; at the same

time I was painfully conscious that we were then in a most dangerous and helpless situation, exposed daily to perils and death, amongst the savages and wild beasts, in a howling wilderness, many miles from the settlements of white men.

"We traveled this day along the banks of the river, and just at sunset reached the spot where John described the boat as hidden. It was still there, though filled with snow and ice—and as sometime would be required to make it ready, orders were given to encamp for the night in a neighboring ravine. In a deep gorge, a large tree had fallen, surrounded by a dense thicket and hidden from observation by abrupt and precipitous hills; this tree made a convenient position for the back of our camp, logs were placed on the right and left, leaving the front open, where fire might be kindled against another log—while skins, and bark peeled from the basswood, afforded a shelter from the winds and wet."

"The next morning, we perceived that a voyage down the river, if we attempted it, must be attended with great difficulty and much danger. The weather was still cold, though more moderate than heretofore, and the ice on either side of the river, along the margin of the water, was eighteen inches thick: the force of the stream always kept the passage in the centre open; the distance across, between the ice, was about two hundred yards."

"The boat was nothing more than a log canoe, about fifteen feet in length, rounded at both ends, and hollowed with the adze. John assisted by Webb and the Sunny Eye, cleared it of ice, by chopping the frozen water with their tomahawks, and then launched it—an operation exceedingly difficult, though practicable; they dragged it from the shore, over the ice, myself, the wounded man, and all our goods and skins within it, to the water's edge; chopping away the last six or eight feet of unsound ice with their axes, till the head of the canoe was brought close above the water, at a signal from Webb it was pushed off, plump into the stream, a fall of about three feet, and instantly they were all on board, each in his place, and the boat was drifting with the current."

"Our condition, however, was one of great discomfort, as we had no suitable protection from the weather, and were confined to constrained and unnatural postures. Of course, my brother had been obliged to leave his horse, which was no great loss."

"Towards night, and just as we were thinking of going ashore to encamp, we found our passage down the river obstructed by a beaver-dam; numberless large trees had been cut down, near the roots, having apparently been hewn with an axe, and some of them laid directly across the stream—intended, as one might have supposed, as a bridge across it. Here, having fastened our boat, we went ashore, started a fire, and prepared our supper."

"During the night the wolves howled dreadfully, and the distant scream of a panther echoed through the woods; but we began to feel ourselves in comparative safety; we believed that a station of United States troops was not far distant, and we were all aware that the savages would avoid the vicinity of such neighbors.

"The next morning we were up betimes, and though it was a work of time and labor to get the boat across the dam, it was finally accomplished, and we continued down the river for many miles. At length we began to discover signs of civilization that could not be mistaken; we heard the sound of chopping in the woods; the distant lowing of cattle, and the crowing of a cock: then, turning a bend in the stream, a house appeared—not a hut or a cabin, but a good, comfortable house; a woman came to the door and looked at us, her countenance expressive of a strange mixture of surprise and curiosity. Upon going ashore, we were most hospitably received, and after remaining a few days, to recruit our wasted strength, were enabled to join our friends. The Sunny Eye continued with us until the warm weather, when, without a word, she suddenly disappeared."

MY REVENGE.

A BEAUTIFUL STORY.

We met in the beginning of the action, I and my enemy, Richard Withers—he on foot, I mounted. It matters not why I hated him with the fiercest wrath of my nature. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and the details, while most painful to me, would be of trifling interest to you. Suffice it that our feud was not a political one. For ten years we were the closest intimates that the same studies, the same tastes, the same arms could make us. I was the elder of the two, and stronger physically; comparatively friendless, as the world takes it, and had no near relatives. Young, solitary, and visionary as we were, it is hard to make you understand what we were to each other. Up to this period of our estrangement, working together, eating together, sleeping together, I can safely say that we had not a grief, not a pleasure, or a vacation, that we did not share with almost boyish single-heartedness. But one single day changed all. We rose in the morning dear friends, and lay down at night bitter foes. I was a man of extremes: I either loved or hated with the strength of my heart. The past was forgotten in the present. The ten years of kindness, of congeniality, of almost humanly kindness, were erased as with a sponge. We looked each other in the face with angry, searching eyes—said but

a few words (our rage was too deep to be demonstrative), and parted. Then in my solitude I dashed my clenched hand upon the Bible and vowed passionately: "I may wait ten years. Richard Withers! I may wait twenty, thirty, if you will; but, sooner or later, I swear I shall have my revenge!"

And this was the way we met.

I wonder if he thought of that day when he laid his hand upon my bridle-rein and looked up at me with his treacherous blue eyes. I scarcely think he did, or he could not have given me that look. He was beautiful as a girl; indeed, the contrast of his fair, aristocratic face with the regular outline and red, curving lips, to my own rough, dark exterior, might have been partly the secret of my former attraction to him. But the loveliness of an angel, if it had been his, would not have saved him from me then. There was a pistol in his hand, but before he had time to discharge it, I cut at him with my sword, and as the line swept on like a gathering wave, I saw him stagger under the blow, throw up his arms and go down with the press. Bitterly as I hated him, the ghastly face haunted me the long day through.

You all remember how it was at Fredericksburg. How we crossed the river at the wrong point, and under the raking fire of the enemy were so disastrously repulsed.

It was a sad mistake, and fatal to many a brave heart. When night fell I lay upon the field among dead and wounded. I was comparatively helpless. A ball had shivered the cap of my right knee, and my shoulder was laid open with a sabre-cut. The latter bled profusely, but by dint of knotting my handkerchief tightly around it, I managed to stanch it in a measure. For my knee I could do nothing. Consciousness did not forsake me, and the pain was intense; but from the moans and wails of the men about me I judged that others had fared worse than I. Poor fellows! there was many a mother's darling suffering there. Many of my comrades—lads of eighteen or twenty, who had never seen a night from home until they joined the army, spoiled pets of fortune, manly enough at heart, but children in years and constitution, who have been used to have every little ache and scratch compassionated with an almost



THE BLOW FROM A FRIEND.

extravagant sympathy—there crushed and dying, huddled together—some where they had weakly crawled upon their hands and knees—and never a woman's voice to whisper gentle consolation. It was pitchy dark, and a cold, miserable rain was falling upon us, the very heavens weeping over our miseries. Then through the darkness and drizzling rain, through the groans and prayers of the fallen men about me, I heard a familiar voice close to my side:

"Water! water! water! I am dying with thirst—if it be but a swallow—water! For God's sake, give me water!"

I recoiled with dismay. It was the voice of my enemy—the voice of Richard Withers. They were once very dear to me, those mellow tones; once the pleasantest music I cared to hear. Do you think they so softened me now? You are mistaken; I am candid about it. My blood boiled in my veins when powerless to withdraw from his detested neighborhood. There was water in my canteen. I had filled it before the last ball came. By stretching my hand I could give him a drink, but I did not raise a finger. Vengeance was sweet. I smiled grimly to myself, and said down in my secret heart:

"Not a drop shall cross his lips though he perish. I shall have my revenge."

Do you recoil with horror? Listen how merciful God was to me.

There was a poor little drummer on the other side—a merry, manly boy of twelve or thirteen, the pet and plaything of the regiment. There was something of the German in him; he had been with us from the first, and was reckoned one of the best drummers in the army. But we could never march to the tap of Charlie's drum again. He had got a ball in his lungs, and the exposure and fatigue, together with the wound, had made him light-headed. Poor little child! he crept close to me in the darkness and laid his cheek on my breast. May be he thought it was his own pillow at home; may be he thought it, poor darling, his mother's bosom. God only knows what he thought; but with his hot arm about my neck, and his curly head pressed close to my wicked heart, even then swelling with bitter hatred of my enemy, he began to murmur in his delirium, "Our Father who art in heaven."

I was a rough, bearded man. I had been an orphan for many a long year; but not too many or too long to forget the simple hearted prayer of my childhood—the dim vision of that mother's face over which the grass had grown for twenty changing summers. Something tender stirred within my hardened heart. It was too dark to see the little face, but the young lips went on brokenly:

"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

It went through me like a knife—sharper than the sabre-cut, keener than the ball. God was merciful to me, and this young child was the channel of his mercy.

"Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

I had never understood the words before. If an angel had spoken it could scarcely have been more of a revelation. For the first time the thought that I might be mortally wounded, that death might be nearer than I dreamed, struck me with awe and horror. The text of a long-forgotten sermon was in my ears: "It is appointed for all men to die, and after death the judgment."

Worse and worse. What measure of mercy could I expect, if the same was meted out that I had meted out to my enemy. The tears welled into my eyes, and trickled my cheeks—the first that I had shed since my boyhood. I felt subdued and strangely moved.

The rain was falling still, but the little head upon my breast was gone. He crept away silently in the darkness. His unconscious mission was fulfilled; he would not return at my call.

Then I lifted myself with great effort. The old bitterness was crushed, but not altogether dead.

"Water! water!" moaned Richard Withers, in his agony.

I dragged myself closer to him.

"God be praised!" I said with a solemn heart. "Dick, old boy—enemy no longer—God be praised! I am willing and able to help you. Drink and be friends."

It had been growing lighter and lighter in the east, and now it was day. Day within and day without. In the first gray glimmer of dawn we looked into each other's ghastly faces for a moment, and then



THE PRAYER ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

the canteen was at Richard's mouth, and he drank as only the fevered can drink. I watched him with moist eyes, leaning upon my elbow and forgetting the bandaged shoulder. He grasped me with both hands.

Bl'od-stained and pallid as it was, his face was ingenuous and beautiful as a child's.

"Now let me speak," he said, panting. "You have misjudged me Rufus. It was all a mistake. I found it out after we parted. I meant to have spoken this morning when I grasped your rein, but—but—"

His generosity spared me the rest.

The wound my hand had inflicted was yet bleeding in his head; but for the blind passion of the blow it must have been mortal. Was vengeance so sweet after all? I felt something warm trickling from my shoulder. The daylight was gone again—how dark it was!

"Forgive me, Dick," I murmured, groping about for him with my hands. Then I was blind—then I was cold as ice—then I tumbled down an abyss, and every thing was blank.

"The crisis is past; he will recover," cried a strange voice.

"Thank God! thank God!" cried a familiar one.

I opened my eyes. Where am I? How odd every thing was! Rows of beds stretching down a long, narrow hall, bright with sunshine; and women wearing white caps and peculiar dresses flitting to and fro with noiseless activity, which in my fearful weakness it tired me to watch. My hand lay outside the covers—it was as shadowy as a skeleton's. What had become of my flesh? Was I a child, or a man? A body, or a spirit? I was done with material things altogether, and had been subjected to some refining process, and but now awaked to a new existence. But did they have beds in the other world? I was looking lazily at the opposite one, when some one took my hand. A face was bending over. I looked up with a beating heart. The golden sunshine was on it—on the fair, regular features, and the lips, and the kindly blue eyes.

"Dick!" I gasped, "where have you been all these years?"

"Weeks, you mean," said Richard, with the old smile. "But never mind, now. You are better, dear Rufus—you will live—we shall be happy together again."

It was more a woman's voice than a man's, but Dick had a tender heart

"Where am I?" I asked, still hazy. "What's the matter with me?"

"Hospital, in the first place," said Richard. "Typhus, in the second. You were taken after that night at Fredericksburg."

It broke upon me at once. I remembered that awful night—I could never, never forget it again. Weak as a child, I covered my face and burst into tears. Richard was on his knees by my side at once.

"I was a brute to recall it," he whispered remorsefully. "Do not think of it, old boy—you must not excite yourself. It is all forgotten and forgiven."

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," I prayed from my inmost heart.

"Those words have been in your mouth day and night, ever since you were taken," said my friend.

I lay silent, cogitating.

"Tell me one thing," I asked. "Are we in the North, or South?"

"North. In Philadelphia."

"Then you are a prisoner," I said, mournfully, recalling his principles.

"Not a bit of it."

"What do you mean?"

Richard laughed.

"I have seen the errors of my ways. I have taken the oath of allegiance. When you are strong enough again we shall fight side by side."

"And the wound in your head?" I asked, with emotion, looking up at his bright, handsome face.

"Don't mention it! It healed up long ago."

"And the little drummer?"

Richard bowed his head upon my hand.

"He was found dead upon the field. Heaven bless him! The said he died praying, with his mother's name upon his lips."

"Revere him as an angel!" I whispered, grasping him by the hand.

"But for his dying prayer we had yet been enemies!"

THE ORDEAL OF BATTLE.

"And this is your final decision, Miss Clay?"

She was a beauty born, that rose-mouthed little Rachel Clay with her large wistful eyes trembling with blue, radiant light, like a veiled cheek stained with pomegranate crimson—an empress of hearts from her cradle up! And sitting in the framework of roses that trailed athwart the casement, with white ribbons fluttering from her satin brown curls, and one red jewel flashing among the folds of her muslin dress, you would almost have fancied her some fair pictured saint.

Harry Cleveland was leaning against the window, a tall, handsome young fellow, with dark eyes and hair, and a brown cheek, flushed deeply with suppressed anger and mortification.

"Yes, Mr. Cleveland, it is," said Rachel, calmly lifting her clear eyes to his face. "You have asked me for my reasons—and, although I question your right to make such a demand, still, I have no objections to render them."

"Speak on," said Harry, biting his lip furiously, "let me know why I am condemned."

"They are soon spoken," said Rachel, quietly. "I have liked you very much, Mr. Cleveland—still like you—but in the man whom I marry I look for greater firmness and decision of purpose than you have ever displayed. Earnestness, resolve, these are the only qualities that I can respect. Do you misunderstand me? do you suppose that I blame you for the lack of qualifications which—which—"

Rachel paused instinctively, while the pomegranate tinge on her cheeks blazed into vivid scarlet, in sympathy with the deep blush that dyed her lover's whole face. He bowed simply, and walked out of the room with a firm, haughty step.

Late that evening he sat at his window, with clenched teeth and lowering brow, watching the fiery embers of sunset fade into the purple gloom, and noting the silver of innumerable constellations as they followed one another over the blue concave of heaven. But the gleam of sun and stars might have been Egyptian darkness for all he knew or cared about their gentle influences.

"Life!" he murmured darkly to himself, "what is it worth to me now? What care I who wins the glittering prizes in fate's lottery, or who is rejected—and for a mere whim too! If I could only forget her as quickly as she will forget me! the fickle, beautiful enchantress!"

"Hallo, Cleveland! I'm going to call on pretty Rachel Clay. Will you come go along, too?"

Captain Morrell had paused under the window, with his brown, merry face turned upward, and the dim gas-lamp flickering over his gold shoulder-straps.

Cleveland shook his head

"Not to-night!"

And Morrell went on his way, the fiery eye of his cigar gleaming fitfully through the darkness.

"There he goes!" muttered the solitary misanthrope, "with his gilt buttons and his military airs and graces—and it is for such as he that Rachel throws away my love!"

"So you've enlisted, Harry?" said old Squire Clay, polishing the glasses of his spectacles. "Well, it's what I'd do myself, if I was forty years younger. Ain't you comin' in to tell our Rachel good-bye? Haven't time? Well, I do declare!"

The Squire gazed in astonishment after the vanishing figure of Harry Cleveland on horseback, as it disappeared among the trees.

"I wonder what Rachel will say," was his unspoken comment.

But Rachel said nothing.

While, day by day, the old wound rankled and grew sorer in Harry Cleveland's heart.

"Will he live, Doctor?"

Every pulse in Rachel Clay's being seemed to stand still, as her blue, dilated eyes searched the doctor's kind, sun-browned face.

"Live? Why shouldn't he? All he needs is a little care, and I see he is likely to get that. Now don't blush up, my dear, he's not the first soldier in my ward that has a pretty girl come to nurse him, and I like them all the better for it! Give him the draught when he wakes, and keep the bandage on his forehead. He'll probably carry an ugly scar to his grave! but that will be the worst of it."

The good old man trotted briskly away to the next "case," while Rachel, kneeling down beside the low iron bedstead, cried tears of intense thankfulness that Harry Cleveland would not die.

"Rachel! I am not dreaming surely—yet it was but a moment ago we made that cavalry charge on fixed bayonets!"

His large, unnaturally brilliant eyes wandered vaguely around the room—and then returned to the tender face bending over him.

"It was three days since, dearest; you are lying in the barracks now, wounded, and I have come from Glenville to nurse you!"

"You, Rachel?"

"Yes, Harry, I!"

"Why did you come?" he asked quite gloomily.

"Because I love you, Harry," she murmured, the bright crimson suffusing her whole face.

A strange light of rapture flashed into Harry's eyes—his pulse leaped within the fevered veins.

"Love me, Rachel—yet it is not a month since you refused me!"

"Dearest, because I fancied you weak and vacillating. In the fiery smoke of the battle-field you have proved yourself worthy of the tenderest love—you have written your name hero on the glorious though sanguine rolls of your country. Harry, because I refused you once, you will not reject me now?"

"Reject you, my heart's queen! Oh, Rachel, how can I be sure that this is not a bright, treacherous delirium?"

She bent her soft cheek on his—and then he knew that it was no baseless vision, but a sweet reality.

THE STUDENT'S STORY.

A RIDE WITH DEATH, OR THE SKELETON OF THE COLLEGE

During the winter of 1859 I was a junior in one of the New England colleges, and ascending the hill of science, retarded somewhat by flirtations and adventures. Whether I was a good or bad scholar has little to do with my present purpose, but in order to assure myself of the confidence of the public I will say that by referring to the archives of said institution you will find my name in legible characters as a recipient of a sheep-skin.

I purpose to follow this imperfect but sufficient introduction with an incident in my college-life, which has never failed to exert a certain influence over me, and I am daily reminded of it by a grinning skull which hangs up in my bedroom.

One winter evening, after going over to the college buildings and satisfying myself that there was no special "scrape" on hand for that night, I returned to my room and concluded that I would conduct myself in a studious and quiet manner.

It had been snowing all day, but now the sky was clear and the stars shining brightly seemed to envy the moon as she threw her gentle rays through the snow-laden elms upon the streets below. Looking from my window I saw the merry sleighs dashing by, some filled with quiet love-makers, others over-burdened with boisterous students evidently out for a frolic, while on the opposite side of the street lay the city cemetery with its sad monuments of the dead, mocking as it were the enjoyments of the hour. Opening my pocket-book I found it fully concurred in the petition: "Lead us not into temptation;" and knowing that love was inadequate to procure a horse and sleigh, I donned my wrapper and slippers and prepared for intellectual havoc.

Accordingly I took from my library of ancient and modern worthies "Hamilton's Metaphysics," but considering that a smoke was first in order, my pipe was quickly filled with Turkish, a good old rocking-chair drawn up before the glowing grate, and my study table placed at my left, with a kerosene lamp throwing out a mild and pleasant light. Lighting my pipe, and seating myself as comfortably as experience or imagination could suggest, I indulged in lazy thoughts and fancies. Now I would make a ring (an accomplishment of dexterous smokers only), and as it sailed slowly toward the ceiling revolving on its imaginary axis, gradually expanding, and, finally breaking into many little clouds, seemed to fill the room with a thousand fairy

castles, I imagined each of them made more beautiful by her whose black eyes, peering through the smoke-wreaths, threw gentle glances and then vanished.

Again, I would speculate upon my course in college. Whether I would graduate with honor, passing successfully my examinations, and clothe myself with the dignity of an alumnus. Whether the world would receive me kindly, or was it cold and selfish as I had heard gray-haired men say it was, who, watchworn and weary, had experienced its hardships and, lying down to die, had longed to live no more, for life to them was bitterness and woe.

While musing thus I was startled by a rap at my door, and in came the old janitor of the medical college, "Captain Cook." Why he was surnamed "Captain" I am unable to say. Perhaps because like the mythical ferryman of the lower regions he was interested in the disposal of dead bodies.

"Well, Captain," said I, looking at him through a dense cloud of smoke, "what is the latest news from your abode of dead men's bones and empty skulls? Any new subject arrived for the unskilful knife of some heartless 'medic?' Come, old mortality, take a pipe and tell me some horrible tale about walking skeletons enveloped with sulphurous smoke that haunt your chamber every night, their sightless sockets peering over your bed and filling your soul with terror and longings for the light of day."

"Bob," replied the Captain, filling his short ebony pipe, "no ghost or skeleton ever frightened this old coon. Oh, no! they all know me. I haven't boiled down bodies and strung their bones upon wires for nothing. I tell you after a man has died, been hacked to pieces by one of those ignorant students, and then taken a warm bath in my old, black kettle, and finally been strung on wires—if he ain't dead after that, at least it will be pretty difficult for him to stand the night air. Eh, my boy!" and the Captain indulged in a low, chuckling laugh, evidently concluding that he had fully established a physiological fact that after a man had died his locomotive powers ceased, a conclusion which we all shall arrive at with less argument than the Captain's.

"Captain, to speak in a classical manner: 'Plato, thou reasonest well.' But I myself believe that we have visits from the spirit land. In this very room only last night I was awakened by the sweetest music. At first it seemed at a great distance, but coming nearer and nearer, it finally appeared to be right over my bed. Quietly turning my head, I saw the most beautiful vision. Angels were bearing home to the realms of bliss some lifeless wanderer of the earth. As they mounted upward on their golden wings, filling the air with the most delicious harmony, this form, which had been perfectly motionless,

turned toward me and, smiling, whispered: 'Farewell. All is peace. I am confident it looked exactly like my mother. And so excited was I by the resemblance that I could not sleep, but walked my room all night, now praying that my mother's life might be spared for many years, and again laughing at my fears and consoling myself that it was only a vision and perhaps a dream.'

"Oh, gas!" interposed the Captain. "Some baby dream. Do you suppose that you are of so much consequence that angels would take the trouble to tell you what they are going to do? If so, I shall have to engage your board over at the asylum. Now, Bob, if you really want to have a good time, come with me to-night. I am going over to the B—— Poor-house, about half-past eleven o'clock, to get a couple of dead bodies. I have a horse and sleigh and plenty of good Santa Cruz, and if we don't have a jolly ride it will be because our companions ain't sociable. Come, my boy, no excuses. You must go. Such a chance don't come around every night. Well, I do say, how pale you look! You ain't afraid, are you?"

"No, Captain, I was merely thinking of that dream. But I will go. You may expect to see me over at your den in good season. In the meantime I will just run over my lesson for to-morrow. 'Duty before pleasure,' as Abraham said to Isaac when he was carrying the wood for the sacrifice. Mind you do not take too much Santa Cruz, for in that case you might become an unsociable companion."

"That will be all right," replied the Captain; "but do you take care that you don't keep me waiting by trying to figure out that vision before you go." Refilling his pipe he went away, leaving behind him a train of smoke which seemed to me to be filled with a thousand little dancing skeletons.

After he had gone, I said to myself: "This truly will be an adventure—a sleigh-ride with death"—and as I thought of the Captain was tempted to say—"and the devil." Having seriously considered the possibility of the existence of ghosts, I thought that this would be a good opportunity to test the truth of my opinions; for surely we never could accomplish such a ride without seeing something of the supernatural. Deciding that I would go with the Captain, I took down my Metaphysics and prepared my recitation for the following morning. Soon I became absorbed in such interesting questions as, How does a man know that he knows what he does know? How many latent ideas would be developed by an ass standing between two equally attractive bundles of hay? Is a man falling from the top of a building a free-will agent, or the creature of necessity?

While I am thus engaged confusing my mind with Hobbe's Theory Refuted, Reid's Doctrine Disapproved, Hume Confuted, Fallacy of

Adam Smith, etc., I would call the reader's attention to the following sketch of my friend the Captain.

The Captain was a very original character, both in his appearance and conduct. Long, red hair fell in tangled locks upon his shoulders. His face red with the evaporation of Santa Cruz rum was rendered more unseemly by a short, grizzly beard, while two restless eyes, shaded by an old slouched hat and set far back in his head, looked out upon you with such a sly, wicked glance that your soul was filled with fear and you imagined there stood before you some old pirate whose hands were stained with the blood of a thousand innocents. He had been janitor of this medical college for forty years, and could tell you many a sickening tale of bodies stolen from their quiet resting-place and stowed away at night in the cellar of that old building to be prepared for the dissector's knife. How he loved to visit country graveyards when nature blushing in all the beauties of spring called upon relatives and friends to cover with flowers the quiet resting-places of those they mourned, and when with tears they leaned upon the tomb-stone and sighed for the same repose, he had laughed to think the grave had been emptied long ago by his own hands, and the forms so much loved by them ruthlessly seized from their calm repose while the tones of the funeral bell still lingered on the midnight air.

He seemed to have lost all sympathy for the good and beautiful. So many years he had walked among the dead that the "King of Terrors" by him was never feared. No thought had he of immortality, or life beyond the grave sacred to the service of God.

He had but one companion of his solitude. It was a small black bottle filled with his favorite Santa Cruz. Barnaby Rudge was not more attached to Grip, the omnipresent raven, than was the Captain to this bottle. He wore a pea-jacket with a capacious pocket for its express accommodation, and watched it as if it was the palladium of his liberty.

Why I had taken such a fancy to this man I cannot tell. Although I feared him still I could not resist the temptation to associate with him, and many hours have I enjoyed in hearing his wild and curious tales of olden times.

CHAPTER II.

HAVING fortified myself with cigars, a Colt's-revolver, and "a little for the stomach's sake," I set out for the Captain, who, by the way, lived in the basement of the medical college-building which immediately adjoins the cemetery, a circumstance no less curious than appropriate. I was confident that if we were stopped on the road I could at least establish my identity as a student, peaceably if possible, forcibly if necessary, as warlike men say.

"Hilloa, Bob! I was just going over after you. Jump in, my boy. No time to lose. Dead people, you know, are mighty punctual."

I was thus saluted by the Captain, seated in a double sleigh, reins in hand and anxious to be off. We were soon on our way; and driving rapidly through the streets, meeting here and there parties returning from some pleasure-excursion, we emerged from the city, and flying along the turnpike we soon found ourselves travelling alone and in solitary places. We had some twelve miles to go, and soon the jingling bells became very monotonous, so I determined upon having a talk with my old companion. Lighting a cigar—I could not persuade the Captain to take one, since he preferred his pipe—I said to him:

"Captain, who are these people that we are going after? Tell me whether their friends know about your errand to-night."

"Friends!" replied the Captain, looking at me with a sneer; "who ever heard of poor-house people having friends. But suppose they had friends, how much better off would they be now? Death wouldn't serve them a bit better. The grave, you know treats king, beggar, thief, and Christian, all alike—the worms feed upon all. Queer, ain't it?" and the Captain, taking a long draught from his bosom friend, the black bottle, broke out into a laugh which seemed to startle the very hills.

"Come, Captain, less moralizing! And now about our future companions—do you buy them?"

"Yes," said the Captain, "five dollars a-piece. I tell you, Bob, it makes me feel bad as I think of the time when I didn't have to buy subjects. I used to watch for funerals, and there wasn't a body put under the sod for ten miles around this place without my knowing it. You see that moon? I used to hate it, for I never could work nandy with so much light, and many good chances have I lost by its shining brightly on new-made graves. But times have changed.

Every thing is built up around here, and instead of burying people in the country they are laid away in the cemeteries under lock and key. This new way of doing things has made the Captain's spade rusty and his resurrection wagon of no account. 'There's one of the evil effects of civilization for you!' and the Captain lashed the horses as if they had been the instigators of these improvements in the science of burial.

"Captain," I asked, "are these bodies male or female?"

"One is a man, the other a woman," replied the Captain. "I feel kind of bad for the man, but I am glad the woman is gone. I wish every woman was dead. I hate women. Yes, I hate 'em—don't I, Santa?" said the Captain, addressing himself to his bottle. As he replaced it I judged from his manner that he had received a satisfactory reply.

"Is there any thing or anybody that you love? You seem bereft of every kind feeling and sympathy. How can you bear to lie down and die, knowing that you have never loved or kindly treated your fellow-man, and that no one will ever mourn your loss or drop a flower upon your grave?"

"Bob," said the Captain, "take the reins and I will tell you a secret which has never left my breast for twenty years, and your friendship is the pledge of secrecy hereafter:

"Full thirty years ago * * * * * she turned toward me with a countenance full of sorrow and love and said: 'I forgive you all, but will never return. Farewell.' Soon her form was lost in the distance as she rapidly hurried away from one who should have been her best friend and protector. I went back to our room. It was a bitter cold night, and as I lay down upon my bed I could but wonder where she would go for shelter. I slept; and waking on the morrow I found I was indeed alone. She who had sacrificed so much for me, and with all my faults loved me as no mortal ever loved, was gone. Aye, driven away by my own hand, and never again to return. As I pondered over it I grew more hardened, and hated her worse than ever. Through her I hated all women, and wish them evil. Since then I have lived alone, no friend but Santa until you came to college. So much for my secret."

"Well, Captain," I replied, "no wonder that you hate women. We always dislike those whom we have injured. Their very presence, since it calls up our own misdeeds, becomes unbearable. Therefore it is natural that you, after such cruel treatment of your best friend, should hate not only her; but those who remind you of her. Ah, Captain, a fortune-teller could easily predict your fate."

We were rapidly approaching the town. Staid-looking farm-houses

with their air of homeliness and virtue were gradually giving place to the more modern and neat-appearing houses of a New England village.

We passed through the sleeping village, and as we neared the outskirts a light was visible in the distance. The Captain, rousing himself from the stupidity into which my moral dissertation on his character had evidently thrown him, pointing to the light, said:

"That's the poor-house, Bob. There's where paupers live high at the expense of other people, and die in the midst of comfort. If you are ever in want of a home here is a safe retreat and plenty of victims to keep you company."

"Captain," I replied, "I think, from all accounts of the benevolence of such institutions, their unstinted charity and kindness, I should much prefer the application of cold-steel to my jugular and a comfortable suicide."

"I hope they'll tote them bodies out mighty sudden," said the Captain as we drove up to the door of a large, dingy-looking house, which seemed to have "pauper" written on its very door-stones."

"Well, you're a nice man, ain't you, keeping pious folks up till midnight," said a sharp voice, as a woman appeared at the door holding a candle in one hand and with the other protecting it from the wind which threatened every moment to extinguish it. From her appearance I immediately concluded that she was the female guardian of the establishment. Such a sharp, angular, vinegar-faced, dead-to-all-humanity countenance is seldom exhibited to mortals, and piercing eyes, which must have struck terror and dismay into the very vitals of the most energetic pauper, added an additional incubus to her charms.

"Woman, I'm no pauper!" said the Captain. "Either bring out those bodies, or else take your own in very sudden."

"Joseph, what in the world are you doing? I never saw such lazy man! Why don't you fetch 'um down? I should think you was dying yourself."

Having given this command in a voice which startled by its harsh-



THE PRETTY JANITRESS.

ness even our horse, the matron disappeared for a moment and returned followed by a forlorn-looking man who carried in his arms a huge bundle wrapped in a sheet.

"That's the woman," said Joseph, in a scarcely audible voice, as he deposited the body in the back-seat of the sleigh.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Grip, "and she was the laziest woman that's been in this house for fifteen years. Pretended she had the heart-disease and could not work. I used to give her a piece of my mind 'bout folks living on other people's means, when if it wasn't for being so 'tarnal lazy they might make a fortin. Now I've supported myself and that husband of mine for the past twenty years by keeping this house, and laid up money beside by scrimping the table. Ain't it so, Joseph?"

"Yes," answered Joseph, in a tone which indicated that his future happiness depended in a great measure upon the reply he should make, "Sally Ann is the sharpest woman in this town, sharp as a razor with a dozen fine edges."

"Poor Joseph!" I soliloquized, "you are only one of a thousand such obedient husbands, the celerity of whose movements is only equalled by the rapidity of their wives' tongues. Unfortunate man! what historian shall ever do justice to thy matrimonial docility or the humility of thy meek and quiet spirit."

While musing thus upon the character of this hymenial martyr who had now brought out to the sleigh our second passenger, I was interrupted by the energetic language of Mrs. Grip:

"That's a man. I'm glad to see him go. Of all the laziest men that man was the laziest. I believe he died because he was too lazy to breathe. He was everlastingly complaining of the rheumatism, but he was always the first at the table, and eat—I never saw the beat! The extra amount that man has cost the parish would keep the heathen in tracts for a year."

"What did you say was the matter with this woman, Mrs. Grip?" said I, interrupting her in the midst of her raillery at my much-injured and oppressed sex.

"I don't know what you would call it. The doctor said it was consumption; but they kinder run every thing into consumption in our days, specially when they can't tell what does ail us."

"You say she has been in this house for fifteen years. Do you know her history, Mrs. Grip?"

"Don't know any thing 'bout her," replied Mrs. Grip.

I tried mighty hard to worm out of her who she was, where she came from, for what she came here, whether she had any friends, and why she didn't go to them. But she wouldn't tell me, so I quit asking.

"Come," said the Captain, "we can't wait any longer. Here's ten dollars for these bodies. I tell you, Mrs. Grip, I feel sad to think that I am buying bodies right in sight of the graveyard where I used to steal them," and as the Captain counted out the money into the broad palm of Mrs. Grip's hand, which looked like an expanded contribution-box, he seemed to be very doubtful as to the propriety of the act. I could but notice the utter disregard manifested by Joseph as he saw this new influx of specie into the matrimonial treasury. While Mrs. Grip's eyes dilated to their utmost capacity, Joseph's countenance illustrated the practical working of the rule: "To the victor belongs the spoils." He well knew that the money represented no future personal happiness of his own.

CHAPTER III.

THE Captain having assigned to me the back-seat in order that our female friend might not want for any attention in her midnight rile, deposited the male body on the front seat by himself, so that the dead were indeed the companions of the living.

Bidding Mrs. Grip and her obedient spouse good-evening, and being assured that she expected "two more to go off" before the winter closed, we turned our horses homewards and rapidly retraced the road through the village, which, quiet as ever, seemed unconscious of the errand we had accomplished, and that two of its inhabitants rode through its streets for the last time.

Directly in front of me was the Captain, regardless of his new companion, who sat beside him grim and silent. Cautioning him against too much drink, I soon became occupied in speculations as to my fellow passengers.

Within a foot of myself, and leaning back against the seat, was the body of a female, silent and motionless, enveloped in a sheet. What a commentary, thought I, is this on human life! What matters it whether this body, once so full of life, but now soulless and decaying, is buried beneath the green sod of the valley over which the winds would ever moan their sad requiem and merry birds mock with their thousand songs the silence of the grave, or the dissector's knife, rapidly destroying all human shape and beauty, consigns it to the loathsome depths of some dark vault filled with mouldy bones and eyeless skulls.

In came a skeleton, which walked slowly towards the coach—"Did you see that?" said the Doctor, while his voice trembled and was scarcely audible.—Page 87.



She must have a history. No doubt a sad one. Perhaps upon this very moon, which now shines so gently upon her winding-sheet, she has often gazed sorrowful and alone, and, watching with tearful eyes its silent march through the heavens, wished herself as near the realms of endless bliss. Or, when a little girl, before time had burdened her heart with its many sorrows, no doubt she watched those very stars as they twinkled and glistened in their distant home, and wished that



A RIDE WITH THE DEAD.

she might be a star and shine all night and not be sleepy.

Now her life of sorrow is ended, and the volume of her sufferings has been sealed. No more tears and burning sorrows; no more long and wretched nights filled with sad forebodings of the future; no more desertion and cruelty from friends and kindred, and freezing charities doled out by the greedy hand of wealth; no more crushing poverty, making her soul recoil upon its very self and sigh for the tardy coming of death, a welcome messenger to those

bereft of hope; no more bitter strivings with want and disappointments following fast upon her plans and purposes; no more sighing for the rest of those who, drawing from their very wretchedness the hope of heaven, leave beyond the grave in peace and happiness. Oh! fortunate woman, to be thus free from pains and ills!

As I was thus soliloquizing, a sudden gust of wind blew aside the sheet and exposed to view the face of her whose history had so engaged my mind. What lustrous eyes! Although set in death, yet as the moon's rays fell upon them they seemed to look at me with all the earnestness and power of life—thought. An open mouth disclosed a beautiful set of glistening teeth which, grinning in her shrunken jaws, gave to her face a hideous look. Her long, black hair floated upon the breeze in wild disorder, while her winding-sheet catching in its loose folds the passing wind caused her frail body to sway with a life-like motion.

By a sudden lurch of the sleigh her body turned, and that frightful face fastened its cold, steady gaze on me. My blood ran cold, and a creeping horror thrilled my veins, and trembling with terror I rode along unconscious of every thing but my companion, who now watched my every motion.

While thus spell-bound by the supernatural, I was aroused by the fierce voice of the Captain:

"Aha!" said the Captain, with a fiendish shout, "I have you at last! Pray for me! did you? Drink! did I? You were never going to return!" and the Captain sank into his seat exhausted by this sudden fit of anger.

The truth flashed upon me. She was the Captain's wife of former years. Recovering from the shock which this information gave me, I determined upon preventing any further outburst of passion on the part of the Captain. To be riding in the dead of night with two corpses and a drunken man was bad enough, without witnessing any fiendish exultations by the man who had once been the husband of her whose lifeless remains now claimed my protection from his desecrating hand.

It was the work of a moment. The Captain greatly overcome with liquor was speedily reduced to submission, and sullenly seated himself with no gentle assistance from myself by the side of his injured but forgiving wife of former days, while I, gathering up the reins, drove rapidly homewards, keeping a watch upon the Captain's movements.

"Here," thought I, "is a situation calculated to satisfy the most fastidious adventure-seeker. All alone with death, drunkenness, and villany." After a little muttering of vengeance the Captain fell into a drunken stupor from which he did not awaken until we arrived at

our destination as the clock struck four. Having seen the Captain and his two companions safely deposited in the college-building, I took the horses to their stable, and then hastened to my room to catch a few hours' sleep before the prayer-bell should announce the commencement of the day's duties. The recitation in metaphysics which succeeded such an intercourse with the natural world is a matter of college history, and represented by a cipher.

On the following Saturday night I repaired to the Captain's domicile to witness the process of boiling the bodies of our midnight companions who had already undergone the ordeal of dissection. As I neared the college-building I saw a dim light shining from one of the basement-windows, and on looking in there sat the Captain watching a huge cauldron which hung in an old-fashioned fire-place, and around which thick and roaring flames wound their sheets of lurid fire. Near him on the table was Santa, evidently well supplied for the night's entertainment, and beside it were several rusty knives and an old scraping-instrument, all of which no doubt had many a sickening tale written upon their time-worn blades. A peculiar knock gave me safe entrance to this sanctum which the Captain guarded with the strictest privacy.

"Well, Captain," said I, "here you are engaged in your evil deeds. I wonder that you are not afraid of your shadow which dances so wildly upon the wall. Your heart must be as dead as these old bones strung about the ceiling."

"Ah! Bob," replied the Captain, "time does every thing. Wait till you have seen body after body boiled down in that old kettle, and if you don't work without being scared, then you are not like the rest of men. Who do you suppose I have in that kettle now? Yes; nobody else. You see, Bob, I hate her worse than ever, and can make no difference in her favor. Every body that has come into this house for the last twenty-five years has had to go into that kettle. I can't break over my rule. Serve all justly: that's the true doctrine for all who are in authority."

Don't that fire look gay licking with its huge, red tongue the kettle and making it hiss and boil like a young volcano! These old fire-places are glorious, giving out such a flow of light and warmth. No stove for me! I like to see the wood burn and crackle, throwing out its thousand sparks, which go up the chimney like so many stars seeking the heavens. The Captain, rubbing his hands with the greatest enjoyment, drew closer to the fire as if it were his native element. This was indeed a picture of human depravity. An old man—his form bending as it were over the grave—with no hope for the future his soul seared by the sins of many years and dead to all repentance

with no redeeming trait of character, no love for man or fear of God! The body of his wife, desecrated by his own hands, hanging before him in a cauldron, while the rapid flames fast divested it of all that had once made it fair and beautiful! No thought of love or suffering for him in days gone by, when, with all a woman's tenderness and care, she sought to lead him back to truth and virtue, could melt his stubborn heart.

There he sat, his long hair hanging over his face, while his eyes filled with a fiendish delight fixed their revengeful gaze upon the hissing cauldron, which now threw out large volumes of steam, and running over sent up clouds of ashes and smoke from the fire below.

"Captain," said I, "it will be a great calamity if you have your senses on your dying bed. Every one of your misdeeds will rise before you to torment with their hideous shapes your last moments. The ghosts of all the bodies you have so wantonly abused will come around your bed and make death a thousand times more fearful."

"Don't talk such stuff to me!" replied the Captain, with a contemptuous air. "I will risk it. The old Captain will die as he has lived, afraid of nothing and frightened by nobody. Here's to your health, my little preacher, and may you meet your end as bravely as the Captain." Saying this he drank a copious health to our final exit.

Feeling a sort of dread and expectation of walking skeletons and ghosts, I was continually glancing around the room, listening to every sound, and as the doors creaked or windows rattled, I could almost detect the approach of human footsteps. Thus annoyed by my fears I leaned my chair against the wall and watched the Captain as he emptied the cauldron of its contents into a large tub and drawing up his chair began to scrape the flesh off a skull which he had picked out from this mass of human ruins. As bone after bone was divested of its flesh and thrown upon the floor, I turned away in disgust and looked now at the skulls and bones which hung dangling from the ceiling and seemed to watch me like so many argus eyes, and now going around the room I inspected the curious medical diagrams which hung against the wall exhibiting the wonderful structure of the human system, and opened up a wide field for speculation and research.

"No charnel-house," thought I, "can equal this. For here instead of mouldering coffins with their exuding dampness are bones and skulls devoid of flesh, making death more terrible by their open barrenness and swift decay."

"There," said the Captain, as he tossed the last bone upon the floor, "that job is done and I can sleep in peace. I will let the bones dry before I wire them. The skeleton of my wife I shall keep, and dying bequeath it to you as a rich legacy."

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW days after I saw the skeleton hanging up in the Captain's rooms, giving to the apartment a dreariness which none but the most callous heart could have endured.

Notwithstanding such an insight into the Captain's character I could not relinquish our acquaintance, but continued it during my college course until the next and last winter of my sojourn in N— H—, when the following incident occurred terminating our intercourse forever.

One night during the winter of my Senior year I was aroused from my sleep by a loud rap upon my chamber door. Hastily opening it in came a messenger from the Captain. He had expressed a desire to see me, and as he could live but a short time the doctor had granted the request.

The Captain had been battling with a fever for several weeks, and although every thing had been done for his comfort and recovery, this midnight summons was not wholly unexpected to me. A few moments and I was at the bedroom door of my sick friend, and, entering, saw him pale and emaciated lying upon his bed while an attendant bathed his throbbing brows.

I looked at the doctor, an old friend of the Captain's, and was satisfied of the truth of my conjecture. On approaching the bedside he immediately recognized me, and motioning his attendant to retire he extended his emaciated hand, and I sat beside him.

"Bob," said he, in a low and painful whisper, "I am going. Don't forget the old Captain, but remember that he died game. Yes," said he, looking wildly, and throwing his arms with force upon the bed, "I am game, ain't I, Santa? Ha! did you see that skeleton waiting beside the door? He promised to come again. Take it away! I didn't murder her!"

Exhausted with this delirium he sank upon his pillow.

"His mind wanders," said the doctor. "What a life he must have led to be thus tormented! It seems as if the powers of hell had conspired against him."

The Captain now lay breathing long and hard, and as I looked at his wasted frame, his sunken cheeks and glassy eyes, and thought of his sad and ill-spent life, I could but bow my head and weep.

While thus engaged I was aroused by the Captain, who, turning toward me, asked me to hear his last request.

"Bury me," said he, "in some quiet spot, where no one can disturb my rest; in some country graveyard where the birds sing all day and the moon keeps quiet watch by night. Take Santa, and her skeleton, and keep them for my sake. Look!" said he, quickly rising in his bed and staring wildly at me, "did you not see that glittering knife? Take away those skulls, their eyes of fire and chattering teeth!"

A struggle, a groan, the death-rattle, and the clock strikes twelve.

The sound of the distant bell had hardly died away when the door opened and in came a skeleton, which walked slowly toward the couch, looked for a moment at the dead and noiselessly retreated from our sight.

"Did you see that?" said the doctor, while his voice trembled and was scarcely audible. "He must have been in league with the dead."

"Stranger things than that have happened in this house," I replied. "Let us stay no longer, for my blood runs cold, and we know not what scenes may yet transpire before the morning light."

A creaking of the rusty lock and silence alone kept company with the dead.

I saw the Captain buried in a spot which I know he would have himself selected. It was in the graveyard of the village from which we had one year previous brought the two dead bodies referred to in the narrative. In a quiet corner of this churchyard, safe from the intrusion of strangers, we laid the Captain down to rest. In the spring, flowers were planted upon his grave, and having erected a suitable stone to mark his resting-place I left him to the calm repose of the grave, over whose sleeping inmate God himself would keep watch, decking it in summer with beautiful flowers, and in winter wrapping it up in garments of matchless purity.

As I often visited his lonely resting-place, and watched the weeping willows as they swayed to and fro over his tombstone, sorrowing as it were for the end of life, which to all alike must come, the Captain's character as I had known him came back to memory, and filled me with sad forebodings. Thus, thought I, is the fate of those who die in sin. Their friends, while fearing, still hope that He who loved man beyond all thought of pain and suffering may yet be merciful to those who serve Him not while life was full and promising.

THE END.

